-54(R)
CSL-AS-
AS000525
294.5 SKE

MINISTRY OF CULTURE · GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
संस्कृति मंत्रालय · भारत सरकार

GSL

Fig. A. Section.

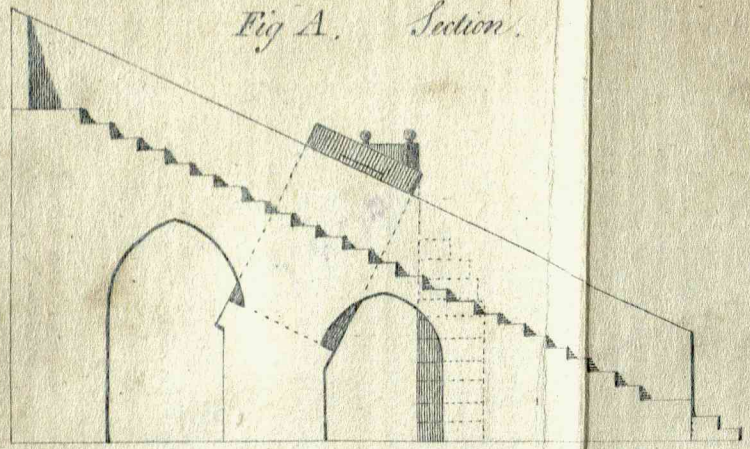


Fig. A. Ground Plan.

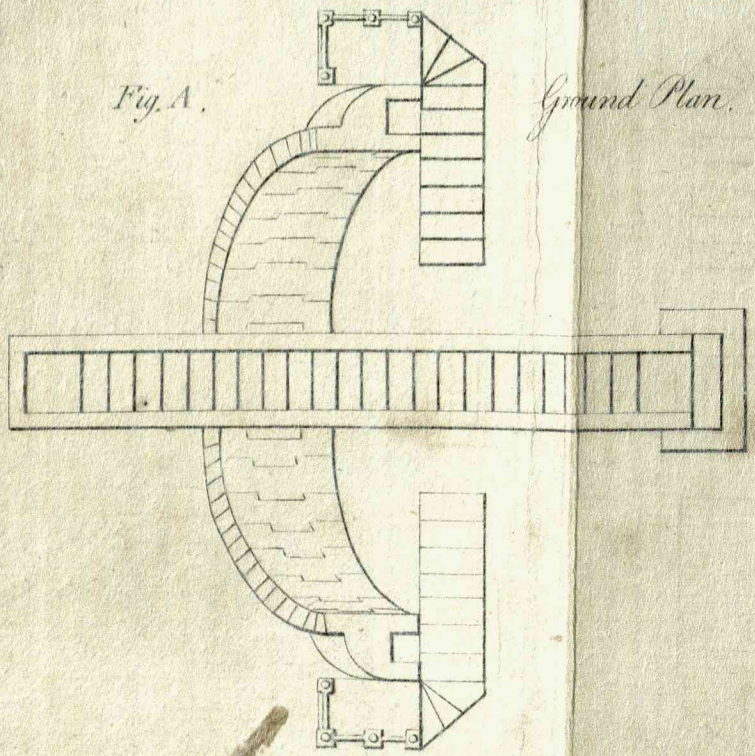


Fig. B.

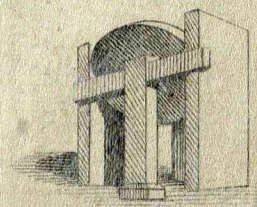


Fig. C.

Fig. A.

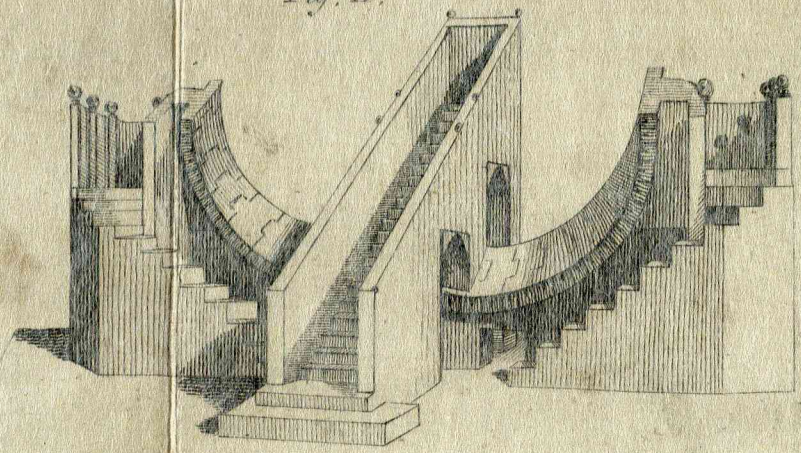


Fig. D.

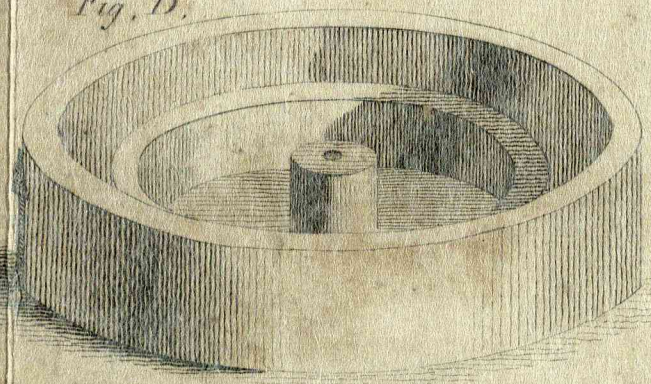
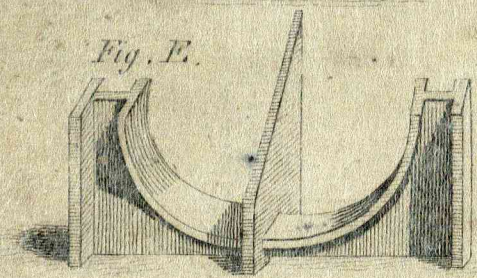


Fig. E.



RARE
FOR CONSULTATION ONLY
SL

SKETCHES

CHIEFLY RELATING TO THE

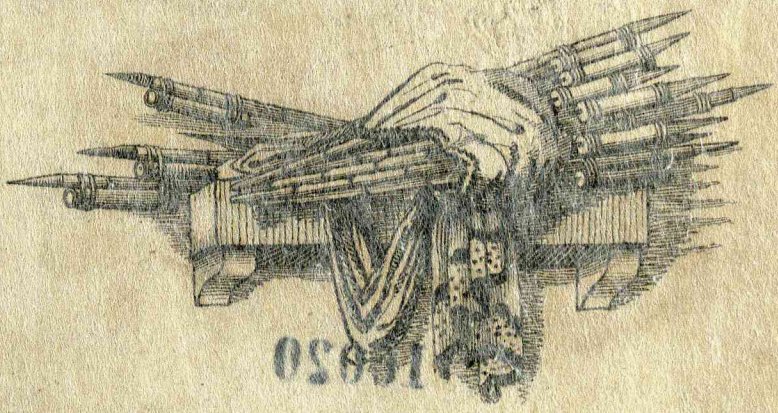
HISTORY, RELIGION, LEARNING, AND MANNERS,

OF THE

HINDOOS.

WITH

A concise Account of the PRESENT STATE of the NATIVE POWERS of HINDOSTAN.



LONDON:

PRINTED FOR T. CADELL, IN THE STRAND.

MDCCXC.

1350

MINISTRY OF CULTURE · GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
सत्यमेव जयते
संस्कृति मंत्रालय · भारत सरकार
54
294.5
SKE-
AS-000525
CSL
~~915.4~~
Ske
L90
915.4
S48
16020

MINISTRY OF CULTURE · GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

CSL

48

ADVERTISEMENT.

IT is not my intention in the following ſheets, to add to the number of authors who have devoted their labours to the hiſtory of the conquerors of Hindoſtan; but to draw the attention of the Public, for a moment, from the exploits of Mahomedans and Europeans, and direct it to the original inhabitants of that country. If this attempt ſhould lead to further inquiry upon ſo intereſting a ſubject, or be productive of any pleaſure or information to the Reader, I ſhall think my pains well beſtowed, as my wiſhes will be accompliſhed.

THE AUTHOR.

N. B. *In reading the names of perſons and places, the vowels are underſtood to be pronounced as in Italian.*

CONTENTS.

SKETCH I.

General Reflections on the History and Religion of Mankind. Page 1

SKETCH II.

Sources of Information concerning Hindostan, - - 62

SKETCH III.

Sketch of the History of Hindostan. 72

SKETCH IV.

Government. Public Buildings. Forts, and Places of the Residence of Rajahs. 89

SKETCH V.

Caſts. - - - 107

SKETCH VI.

Devotees. - - - 121

SKETCH VII.

Religion of the Hindoos. - 131

SKETCH VIII.

Mythology of the Hindoos. - 149

SKETCH IX.

Devotion and Worſhip of the Hindoos. 180

SKETCH X.

Learning and Philoſophy of the Brahmans. - - - 189

SKETCH XI.

Aſtronomy of the Brahmans. - 213

SKETCH XII.

Manners and Cuſtoms. - 249

SKETCH XIII.

Hiſtory and Political State of the preſent native Powers of Hindoſtan. 344

SKETCH I.

General Reflections on the Hiſtory and Religion of Mankind.

THERE is perhaps no ſubject which has given riſe to more ſpeculative inquiry, than the formation of the earth, and the origin of the human race: ſtill the moſt ingenious ſyſtems are, in reality, philoſophical romances; they have never riſen above probable conjecture, unſubſtantiated by proof. In but few inſtances we can trace the period when even thoſe nations were formed, who, in their progreſs or their decline, have filled an important place in hiſtory; while the origin of the greateſt part of the inhabitants of the earth is

entirely hid in obſcurity. Inquiry has in vain attempted to aſcertain from whence the innumerable tribes and powerful nations came, that were found eſtabliſhed in the weſtern hemiſphere; to find out who gave inhabitants to the many detached iſlands, diſcovered in ancient and modern times; and to account for the difference of features, of complexion, and of hair, exiſting between the European, the Hindoo, the Caffer, and the American.

We know that Manco Capac civilized a tribe of wild Peruvians, which afterwards became a numerous and happy nation; that this nation was ſubdued, its princes and nobles deſtroyed, its people maſſacred, with the ferocity of beaſts of prey, by men who profeſſed a religion, the chief characteriſtic of whoſe doctrines is meekneſs and humanity *.

* We cannot however attribute the enormities which were then committed, to the character of the nation, but to the reigning fanaticiſm of the time, and the avarice of particular leaders.

Perhaps

Perhaps the origin of all nations, though their ſubſequent hiſtory may be different, is ſimilar to that of the Peruvians. A number of perſons, by accident or compact, aſſociate and form a tribe; others unite with it, or are compelled to ſubmit to its increaſing power: but how the individuals came into the country, is generally a problem which cannot be ſolved; and though philoſophy may attempt to explain, and in the fruitfulneſs of imagination may find connexions and reſemblances; after the moſt laborious reſearch, we muſt ſtop, and reſt ſatisfied with this truth, that the Supreme Being, who created the univerſe, peopled *our* planet in a manner conformable to his wiſdom, though hid from its ſhort-ſighted inhabitants.

In endeavouring to trace the riſe and progreſs of religion and laws, of arts and ſciences, we are likewiſe frequently ſtopped in our inquiries, or led into error, by the

gloom that in general hides their firſt origin. We may ſometimes imagine that we have diſcovered analogies, and may argue in conſequence of them, when perhaps no other analogy exiſts, than that which ariſes from thoſe innate faculties and principles which nature has implanted in the mind of man, and are common to every people and climate.

There is no nation, I believe, however barbarous it may be *, nor any individual, what-

* Though ſome writers have mentioned nations ſo barbarous, as to have no idea of a Supreme Being, or of a future exiſtence, yet I am inclined to believe that this opinion has ariſen from a want of ſufficient acquaintance with the nations they ſpeak of; as I have myſelf known many inſtances, in which an opinion, haſtily received, has, upon nearer connexion, been found to be erroneous. An eminent Author has ſaid, that tribes have been diſcovered in America who have no idea of a Supreme Being, and no rites of religious worſhip; but he has afterwards alſo ſaid, that "the "idea of the immortality of the ſoul can be traced "from

whatever for the ſake of falſe celebrity he may pretend, who has not a ſenſe, inſeparable from his exiſtence, of a ſupreme ruling power; and this internal evidence of the dependence of the human race upon a ſuperior Being, is a natural and ſufficient baſis to ſupport a ſyſtem of religious worſhip.

The neceſſity of eſtabliſhed rules for the government of any ſociety or claſs of people, is ſo evident, that the rudeſt tribes muſt have ſoon perceived, that they neither could enjoy internal peace and ſafety without them, nor be in a ſtate to defend themſelves againſt attacks from abroad:

" from one extremity of America to the other, and " that the moſt uncivilized of its ſavage tribes do not " apprehend death to be the extinction of being." Garcilaſſo de la Vega, who was born at Cuzco ſhortly after its conqueſt, who was of the family of the Incas, but brought up a Chriſtian, ſays, that the Peruvians believed in the exiſtence of a Supreme Being, and in a ſtate of rewards and puniſhments. The ſame is aſſerted by many authors with reſpect to the Mexicans.

MINISTRY OF CULTURE · GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
GSL

and hence the origin of laws and government.

When tribes or ſocieties are formed, and their immediate wants ſupplied, as men live and communicate with each other, the mode of providing for them is improved; leſs urgent and nicer wants ſucceed; thought is exerted; the faculties of the mind unfold, by being employed; talents are awakened, by being called for and encouraged; and nations, from their real and imaginary wants, and exertions to ſupply them, gradually go on to luxury and to refinement. When the inventions that took their riſe from neceſſity and convenience, have been carried ſo far, as to leave genius at leiſure to gratify itſelf with ſubjects of curioſity and amuſement, it takes a more exalted courſe; the liberal arts follow, and proceed on towards perfection; until ſome of thoſe revolutions to which nations are ſubject, arreſt their progreſs, and again bury them in oblivion. Such

was

was their fate in Egypt, in Greece, and in Italy.

All the religions we are acquainted with, lay claim to a divine origin: all that are found eſtabliſhed in civilized nations, ordain the adoration of God, and, with little other variation, than ſuch as may depend on climate or local circumſtances, inculcate ſuch duties of morality, as tend to preſerve order in ſociety, and procure happineſs to the individual. It might be expected, that an inſtitution in its nature ſo ſacred, and ſo evidently neceſſary to the peace and welfare of mankind, would be leſs liable than any other to perverſion or abuſe: but though nothing can more ſtrongly evince the dominion of our paſſions over our reaſon, we every where find that religion has, more or leſs, been made ſubſervient to their gratification, and employed to impoſe on the credulous multitude. If we ſee the Brahman in Hindoſtan uſing the ſuperſtition he has created, to procure to himſelf and his order

certain diſtinctions and privileges, we have ſeen the Chriſtian prieſt doing the ſame: and, however melancholy the reflection may be, the decline of reſpect for that religion, which in itſelf is ſo pure, may principally be aſcribed to the pride and miſconduct of its miniſters.

The profeſſors of the Chriſtian, the Mahomedan, and the Hindoo religion *, form by far the greateſt portion of the inhabitants of the globe. In compariſon with the number of the followers of any of theſe, every other religious denomination, as far as has been hitherto aſcertained, may be looked upon as inconſiderable. Hiſtory has recorded the origin, and marked the progreſs, of the two former; but the riſe of the latter, and the changes it may have undergone, are placed at a period ſo remote, and we are yet ſo defective in materials, that it is

* There are many reaſons to ſuppoſe, that the inhabitants of Pegu, Siam, and even China, derived their religion from that of Brimha.

impoſſible

impoſſible to follow its ſteps with the ſame preciſion, that may be expected in treating of the others.

The effects of the doctrines of the Khoran are too well known to require a particular diſcuſſion. They were delivered to an unenlightened people, that ſcarcely enjoyed any regular worſhip or government, by a daring and artful man, who profanely affected to have an intercourſe with the Deity, and to be particularly ſelected by him to convey his will to mankind. He ſupported this fabulous revelation with pretended viſions and miracles, which, though deſpiſed by us for their groſſneſs and abſurdity, operated with great effect on the more ignorant Arabians. He commanded belief, puniſhed diſobedience, and every faithful Muſſulman thought it a pious duty to ſubdue thoſe by the ſword, who refuſed to embrace his religion. The leaders of the early Mahomedans, being active and intrepid warriors,

MINISTRY OF CULTURE · GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

riors, at the head of a hardy race of men, whom they had inſpired with fanatic courage, like a torrent bore down all who attempted to oppoſe them, and in an aſtoniſhingly ſhort ſpace of time carried their dominion and their faith into every quarter of the then known world.

Science, as far as the Mahomedan religion ſpread, felt its baneful influence; and ſtill wherever we find the banner of the creſcent raiſed, we ſee it followed by an enſlaved, ignorant, and bigotted race of men, whoſe hiſtory, excepting where it is ſomewhat enlightened by a few Arabian writers, creeps through one continued gloom of cheriſhed barbariſm.

At a time when the Roman empire was at the height of its power, when learning and the arts were admired and encouraged, and the worſhip of the gods in its utmoſt ſplendour, the Chriſtian religion was uſhered into the world in a remote and inconſider-

able

able province, under the mildeſt and moſt humble aſpect.

Thoſe who were choſen to promulgate it to mankind, were taken from the loweſt claſſes of a people, who had ſcarcely excited the attention of their more poliſhed conquerors, by any thing but their turbulence and obſtinacy. The Apoſtles, now ſo juſtly held in high veneration by us, then unknown and undiſtinguiſhed, except within the humble ſphere of their Chriſtian converts, were, with their opinions, little noticed, and are but barely mentioned by the writers of thoſe times *. At firſt, they ſeem to

* It appears, that the Chriſtians, till the reign of Trajan, had been ſo little noticed, that no law had been eſtabliſhed for their trial or puniſhment. When Pliny was governor of Pontus, he applied to his friend and maſter for inſtructions how to proceed againſt them. The letter is curious, and the anſwer contains ſentiments of juſtice that do honour to the great man who wrote it. They are the 97th and 98th in the collection of Pliny's correſpondence.

Tacitus

to have been impriſoned and puniſhed by the magiſtrates, as men who, according to the then prevailing notions, were blaſphemers of the gods. Equally expoſed to the averſion of their countrymen and their conquerors, no teachers of any new religion ever began their miſſion with leſs apparent probability of ſucceſs. But, by their confidence in him they worſhipped, and their unremitting perſeverance, they gradually gained admittance among all ranks of men, from the cottage to the palace. Then, enemies to pride and violence, with the language of perſuaſion they taught duties

Tacitus mentions the Chriſtians as having been accuſed of ſetting fire to Rome in the reign of Nero. He ſays, "Ergo abolendo rumori Nero ſubdidit reos, et quæſitiſſimis pœnis affecit, quos per flagitia inviſos, vulgus Chriſtianos appellabat."—And, after having recounted the excruciating tortures by which many of that religion were put to death, he proceeds,—"Ergo quanquam adverſus ſontes, et noviſſima exempla meritos, miſeratio oriebatur, tanquam non utilitate publica, ſed in ſævitiam unius abſumerentur." See Tacit. Ann. Lib. XV.

that

that were agreeable to the ſoundeſt principles of morality; they recommended obedience, rather than oppoſition, to the eſtabliſhed government; and by theſe mild means, their doctrines, in little more than three hundred years after the death of Chriſt, had made ſo great a progreſs, that they were embraced by the Roman Emperor himſelf. The ſyſtem of heathen mythology, adorned with all the elegance in its rites that a refined and luxurious people could invent, and which had ſo much contributed to the perfection of the arts, fell before the gentle but prevailing force of Chriſtianity; and the eagle of Jove, under which the victorious legions had been led, through a ſeries of ages, to unparalleled renown, was changed for the Croſs, the ſymbol of the faith which their ſovereign had adopted.

But beſides the internal purity of the new doctrine, a variety of combined circumſtances contributed to its rapid advance-

ment; and I hope it will not be thought out of place curſorily to notice them here.

Mr. Gibbon, in his *Hiſtory of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, in following the courſe of human reaſoning, and arguing from apparent cauſes, has obſerved, that the writings of Pagan ſceptics had prepared the way, and the doctrine of the immortality of the ſoul principally contributed to the ſucceſs, of the Chriſtian religion.

If we examine the writings of the ancients on the ſubject of their theology, we ſhall find that polytheiſm was almoſt univerſally conſidered, by men of learning, as a fable fabricated to amuſe the ſuperſtitious multitude, and calculated to maintain the influence and authority of the prieſthood. We find that many of the moſt celebrated philoſophers, both before, during, and after the Auguſtan age, made it the ſubject of their animadverſion: and, as Mr. Gibbon

very

very juſtly remarks, the opinions and examples of men eminent for their rank and learning, muſt have conſiderably influenced the opinions of the people. Few men either take the pains, or are poſſeſſed of ſufficient knowledge, fairly to examine the religion in which they were born; they in general follow it, and believe it preferable to any other, from habit and education. But when it was known, that thoſe who held the higheſt ranks in the ſtate, and who, in conſequence thereof, even officiated in the prieſthood, in their hearts deſpiſed thoſe ceremonies which they performed with apparent ſolemnity; and made devotion, and the devout, the objects of their wit and ridicule; others, from vanity, or deference to their judgment, imitated their example: reſpect for religion was gradually undermined; and the prejudice of education being removed, the mind, left without any fixed ſyſtem, lay open to receive new opinions, and to embrace new doctrines.

In tracing the progreſs of a more rational and pure idea of the Supreme Ruler of the univerſe, than was adopted from the earlieſt times by the *many*, we ſhall find, that the EAST ſhed the firſt light under whoſe influence the variety of ſyſtems that afterwards prevailed, grew up. Pherecides, who had been in Egypt, ſeems to have been the firſt who introduced into Greece a regular notion of a ſtate of rewards and puniſhments, in the doctrine of the metempſychoſis, which, many ages previous to his time, prevailed, not only in Egypt, but among ſeveral more Eaſtern nations.

Pythagoras, the diſciple of Pherecides, travelled into Egypt and Chaldea, and, on his return from Babylon, extended and improved the doctrines of his predeceſſor. It is a doubt among ancient writers, whether he left any works behind him, or not; but by what may be collected from the writings of his diſciples, it appears that he taught the exiſtence of a Supreme Being,

by

by whom the univerſe was created, and by whoſe providence it is preſerved: that the ſouls of mankind are emanations of the Divine Being: that, on their ſeparation from the body, they go to places deſtined for their reception; the ſouls of the virtuous, after having been purified from every propenſity to the things of this world, being readmitted into the divine ſource from whence they flowed; and the ſouls of the wicked ſent back to animate other bodies of men or beaſts, according to the degree and nature of their vices, until, in a courſe perhaps of many tranſmigrations, they had expiated their crimes. Abſtinence from animal food was a natural conſequence of theſe doctrines; but the Pythagoreans refrained likewiſe from every ſort of intoxicating liquor, and from eating beans, for which they ſeem to have entertained a ſuperſtitious reſpect. Beſides theology, Pythagoras is ſaid to have inſtructed his ſcholars in arithmetic, mathematics, natural

hiſtory, and muſic. His ſchool formed a kind of community, into which he admitted the women and children of his followers. He exacted from his diſciples a voluntary poverty, or rather that they ſhould diveſt themſelves of property individually, and live upon one common ſtock. He impoſed ſecrecy; and, in order to teach them patience and perſeverance, they were prohibited from ſpeaking for a greater or leſs ſpace of time, as he thought they ſtood in need of trial and exertion. They were divided into two claſſes. Thoſe who had made a certain progreſs, were admitted about his perſon, and with them he uſed plain and natural language; but to the reſt, who were ſeparated from him by a curtain, he ſpoke in metaphors and ſymbols. His doctrines made a conſiderable progreſs in Greece and Italy, and gave perhaps birth to many of the more rational ſyſtems of philoſophy that ſucceeded them.

SOCRATES.

MINISTRY OF CULTURE · GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
संस्कृत भवन · भारत सरकार

SOCRATES, who was perhaps the wiſeſt of all the ancient philoſophers, confined his doctrines chiefly to maxims of morality. He endeavoured to bring men back from the wild and ſpeculative notions which characterized the learning of his countrymen at that time, and to confine the ſtudies of his diſciples to their own breaſts, in which purity and virtue could not fail of producing happineſs.

His opinions, as handed down to us by thoſe who conſtantly attended him, declare his belief in the unity of God, and the immortality of the ſoul. He taught, that though God has not revealed to us, in what manner he exiſts, his power, his wiſdom, and never-ceaſing providence, are exhibited in all we ſee: that the order and harmony which reign throughout the univerſe announce a Supreme Being, by which every thing is conducted and preſerved: that the religion of every country ordains his worſhip, let it be in ever ſo varied a

manner; and that it is the duty of every one to reſpect the national religion, except in ſuch points as may be contrary to the laws of nature, or may divert the attention from God to any other objects. He ſeems to have believed that the ſoul exiſted before the body*; and that death relieves it from thoſe ſeeming contrarieties to which it is ſubject by its union with our material part. He taught, that the ſouls of the virtuous then return to their former ſtate of happineſs, while thoſe of the wicked were doomed to puniſhments proportionate to their crimes; that happineſs, both in this and in a future ſtate of exiſtence, depends on the practice of virtue, and that the baſis of virtue is juſtice. He compriſed his idea of virtue in this maxim: "Adore God, "honour your parents, and do good to

* This idea ſeems evidently to have been borrowed from Pythagoras, who ſuppoſed the ſouls of men to have pre-exiſted in the divine ſoul, into which they at laſt returned.

"all

" all men. Such is the law of nature and " reaſon." In ſociety, he thought that every private conſideration ought to yield to what could promote the good and ſafety of the community to which we belong; and notwithſtanding the mildneſs of his diſpoſition, his love of tranquillity, and general good-will to mankind, he entered into the buſtle of arms, and ſerved during three years in the Lacedæmonian war, with diſtinguiſhed reputation. Although he thought it not only weakneſs, but even impiety, to be afraid of death, he condemned ſuicide as a proof of cowardice rather than of courage, as we certainly muſt act contrary to our duty to deſert the poſt aſſigned to us by Providence. He ſtrongly recommended perſeverance, ſedateneſs, and modeſty; and of the laſt of theſe virtues he was himſelf a diſtinguiſhed example, often declaring, that the utmoſt extent of his reſearches had only taught him, " that he " knew nothing." He oppoſed the corrup-

tion of the magiſtrates, and the ſuperſtition and hypocriſy of the prieſthood: and at laſt fell a victim to their machinations, for practiſing virtues which have rendered his name ſacred to poſterity.

PLATO, a diſciple of Socrates, travelled into Egypt and Italy, and upon his return eſtabliſhed his ſchool at the Academy. Like Socrates, he believed in the unity of the Supreme Being, without beginning or end; but aſſerted at the ſame time the eternity of matter. He taught, that the elements being mixed together in chaos, were by the will of God ſeparated, reduced into order, and that thus the world was formed: That God infuſed into matter a portion of his divine ſpirit, which animates and moves it; and that he committed the care of this world, and the creation of mankind, to beings who are conſtantly ſubject to his will.

It was further his opinion, That mankind have two ſouls, of ſeparate and different

ferent natures, the one corruptible, the other immortal: That the latter is a portion of the divine ſpirit, reſides in the brain, and is the ſource of reaſon: that the former, the mortal ſoul, is divided into two portions, one of which, reſiding in the heart, produces paſſions and deſires; the other, between the diaphragm and navel, governs the animal functions of life: That the mortal ſoul ceaſes to exiſt with the life of the body, but that the divine ſoul, no longer clogged by its union with matter, continues its exiſtence, either in a ſtate of happineſs or of puniſhment: That the ſouls of the virtuous—of thoſe whoſe actions are guided by their reaſon—return after death into the ſource from whence they flowed, while the ſouls of thoſe who ſubmitted to the government of the paſſions, after being for a certain time confined to a place deſtined for their reception, are ſent back to earth, to animate other bodies.

The above idea of a future ſtate appears to be the moſt prevalent in the works of this philoſopher, and to form what may be called his *ſyſtem*. But at the ſame time it muſt be confeſſed, that throughout his works he broaches ſo many notions of a different or contrary nature, that we are frequently left at large in regard to his real ſentiments. A paſſion for brilliant and novel doctrines, and too great a deſire to acquire fame, even at the expence of truth, ſeems to have been the cauſe of this inconſiſtency in ſo great and wiſe a man *.

ARISTOTLE,

---

* The learned Monſieur Freret in ſpeaking of Plato obſerves :

Il dit ſi ſouvent, et à ſi peu de diſtance, le pour et le contre lorſqu'il parle de l'etat de l'ame après cette vie, que ceux qui regardent les ſentimens de ce philoſophe avec reſpect, ne peuvent s'empecher d'etre choqués et ſcandaliſés. Tantôt il eſt de l'opinion de la metempſycoſe, tantôt de celle des enfers, et tantôt de toutes les deux il en compoſe une troiſieme. Ailleurs il avoit imaginé une maniere de faire revivre les hommes, qui n'a

ARISTOTLE, who ſtudied at the Academy, has been perhaps unjuſtly accuſed of ingratitude to his maſter Plato. He undoubtedly uſed the privilege of every philoſopher, in advancing his own opinions, and differing from thoſe of others, but yet he always admired the talents, and did juſtice to the merits of Plato. He even pronounced an oration to his praiſe, and erected an altar to his memory.

Ariſtotle opened his ſchool at the Lyceum; and, from his manner of teaching, his diſciples became known by the name of Peripatetics. He has by ſome been charged with atheiſm, but I am at a loſs

---

n'a nul rapport avec aucun autre de ſes ſyſtèmes. Dans un endroit il condamne les ſcelerats a reſter dans le Tartare pendant toute l'eternité, dans un autre il les en tire au bout de mille ans, pour les faire paſſer dans d'autres corps. En un mot, tout eſt traité chez lui d'une maniere problematique, incertaine, peu decidée, et qui laiſſe à ſes lecteurs un juſte ſujet de doubter, qu'il ait été lui-même perſuadé de la verité de ce qu'il avançoit.

16020

upon what grounds, as a firm belief in the exiſtence of a Supreme Being is clearly aſſerted by him, and not any where contradicted *.

He taught, that the univerſe, and motion, are eternal, having for ever exiſted, and being without end; and although this world may have undergone, and be ſtill ſubject to, convulſions ariſing from extraordinary cauſes, yet motion, being regular in its operation, brings back the elements into their proper relative ſituations, and preſerves the whole: that even theſe convulſions have their ſource in nature: that the idea of a *Chaos*, or the exiſtence of the elements without form or order, is contrary to her laws which we every where ſee eſtabliſhed, and which, conſtantly guiding

* Ariſtotle n'a pas heſité a reconnoitre Dieu comme premiere cauſe de mouvement, et Platon comme l'unique ordonnateur de l'univers.

Voyage du jeune Anacharſis en Grece.

the

the principle of motion, muſt from eternity have produced, and to eternity preſerve, the preſent harmony of the world. In every thing, we are able to diſcover a train of *motive* principles, an uninterrupted chain of cauſes and effects: and that as nothing can happen without a cauſe, the word *accident* is an unmeaning expreſſion, employed in ſpeaking of effects, of whoſe cauſes we are ignorant *.

That in following this chain we are led up to the primitive cauſe, the Supreme Being, the univerſal Soul, who, as the will moves the body, moves the whole ſyſtem of the univerſe.

Upon theſe principles it was natural for him to ſuppoſe the ſouls of mankind to be portions or emanations of the divine ſpirit, which at death quit the body, and, like a drop of water falling into the ocean, are

* See *Hindoo Philoſophy*, page 202.

abſorbed in the divinity. Though he therefore taught the immortality of human ſouls, yet, as he did not ſuppoſe them to exiſt individually, he conſequently denied a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments. "Of all things," ſays he, "the moſt terrible is death, after which "we have neither to hope for good, nor to "dread evil."

His maxims of morality were of the pureſt kind. "The great end of philo-"ſophy," he taught, "is to engage men "to do that by choice, which the legiſ-"lature would obtain from them by fear. "It is our duty to honour our parents, to "love our children, and to do good to all "men. Societies, or ſtates, are an ag-"gregation of individual families, bound "together by compacts and laws for their "mutual intereſts; and it is the duty of "every member of ſociety, not only to be "obedient to theſe regulations, but to "neglect

" neglect no opportunity of contributing " to the general welfare of the ſociety or " ſtate to which he belongs."

After the death of Ariſtotle, the Peripatetics ſeem to have been divided in their opinions concerning the ſoul, ſome continuing to aſſert that it was a part of the divine and eternal Spirit, others contending, that, being united with the body, their exiſtence mutually depended upon one another, and that both were mortal.

ZENO of Cyprus, the founder of the Stoic ſect, had firſt ſtudied under Crates the Cynic, from whom he perhaps imbibed thoſe notions of auſterity which afterwards characteriſed his doctrines.

He believed in the unity of the Supreme Being, and that the names of the other deities of his countrymen were only ſymbols of his different attributes.

He taught, that throughout nature there are two eternal qualities; the one active, the other paſſive: That the former is a pure

MINISTRY OF CULTURE · GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
संस्कृति मंत्रालय · भारत सरकार

and ſubtle æther, the divine ſpirit; and that the latter is in itſelf entirely inert, until united with the active principle: That the divine ſpirit, acting upon matter, produced fire, air, water, and earth; or ſeparated the elements from each other: That it cannot however be ſaid, that God created the world by a voluntary determination, but by the effect of eſtabliſhed principles, which have ever exiſted and will for ever continue: Yet as the divine ſpirit is the efficient principle, the world could neither have been formed nor preſerved without him, all nature being moved and conducted by him, while nothing can move or affect him. Matter may be divided, meaſured, calculated, and formed into innumerable ſhapes; but the divine ſpirit is indiviſible, infinite, unchangeable, and omnipreſent.

He ſuppoſed the univerſe, comprehending matter and ſpace, to be without bounds; but that the world is confined to certain limits,

limits, and is ſuſpended in infinite ſpace: That the ſeeds of all things exiſted in the primitive elements, and that by means of the efficient principle they were brought forward and animated: That mankind come into the world without any innate ideas, the mind being like a ſmooth ſurface, upon which the objects of nature are gradually engraven by means of the ſenſes: That the ſoul of man, being a portion of the Univerſal Soul, returns, after death, to its firſt ſource, where it will remain until the deſtruction of the world, a period at which the elements, being once more confounded, will again be reſtored to their preſent ſtate of order and harmony.

Zeno taught, that virtue alone is the ſource of happineſs, and that vice, notwithſtanding the temporary pleaſures that it may afford, is the certain cauſe of pain, anxiety, and wretchedneſs: That as men have it in their power to be virtuous, happineſs may be acquired by all, and that

thoſe

thoſe who by vice and intemperance become miſerable, have no right to complain of their ſufferings. "A virtuous man," continues he, "adores the Supreme Being, "reſtrains his paſſions, and enjoys the "goods of this world, as if nothing be- "longed particularly to himſelf. He con- "ſiders all mankind with the ſame degree "of affection, and having no ſtrong par- "tialities to individuals, he comforts indiſcri- "minately thoſe who are afflicted, receives "ſuch as want an aſylum, and feeds thoſe "who hunger. All this he does undiſturbed "by ſtrong emotion; he beholds the divine "will in all things, and, amidſt all the tu- "mults of this world, preſerves a mind "ſerene and unruffled. Neither reproach "nor praiſe affect him, nor doth he indulge "reſentment on account of injuries. He is "not afraid of death, but in the retirement "and obſcurity of the night he examines the "actions of the day, avows his faults, and "endeavours to amend them: and when he

"finds

" finds the hour of diſſolution approaching,
" he either awaits his fate, or voluntarily
" meets it."

Theſe ſeem to have been the principal outlines of the ſyſtem of Zeno; although many of the Stoics carried the idea of the neceſſity of mortification and abſtinence to a much greater length, than appears to have been the intention of their founder.

Epicurus, whoſe doctrines were ſo oppoſite to thoſe of the Stoic philoſophers, attempted to account for the various operations in nature, without having recourſe to a Supreme Being. " There is no oc-
" caſion," ſays he, " to aſcribe to the gods
" what may be explained by philoſophy."
But in this bold and poſitive aſſertion, he betrays only preſumption and vanity; as in the place of a rational ſyſtem, allowing the agency of the divine will, he has ſubſtituted an hypotheſis too fanciful and imaginary to ſupport any clear and decided opinion.

He ſets out by obſerving that, before we can form any fit idea of a ſubſtance that is diſtinguiſhed by any particular ſhape, or that poſſeſſes any particular qualities, we muſt firſt have an idea of its primitive conſtituent parts. He therefore eſtabliſhes the following principle, as the baſis upon which his whole ſyſtem reſts. That every thing is compoſed of atoms, differing in ſhape, but each indiviſible, and poſſeſſing a natural tendency to unite, the exertion of which is the primary cauſe of motion in the whole ſyſtem of nature, and of the firſt formation of all bodies. That matter enables us to conceive an idea of certain portions of ſpace, as different events do of time; but it is impoſſible to imagine ſpace to be bounded by any limits, or time to have had a beginning. That the univerſe, therefore, muſt from eternity have been the ſame in its nature, its extent, and quantity. That the world—our ſyſtem—has its limits, and is ſuſpended

in infinite ſpace, in which myriads of other worlds may exiſt. That when we confine our ideas to the world we inhabit, we may form diſtinct notions of its duration, and ſuppoſe it to have a beginning and an end; but if we extend them to the univerſe, and to eternity, we find no reſting place, and they muſt neceſſarily be loſt and confounded in the contemplation. That nothing can be properly ſaid to be annihilated: for though things may be diſſolved from their particular forms, and their component parts ſeparated, their atoms remain what they were from eternity, their quantity being liable neither to increaſe nor diminution.

Of *atoms* he likewiſe ſuppoſes the ſoul of man to be compoſed, but theſe latter are *indeſcribably* ſmall, igneous, and volatile. Its principal ſeat is in the heart, and in it originate pleaſure, pain, fear, and anger. The ſoul is moved to action by the objects conveyed to it by the outward ſenſes, its

chief affections being pain and pleaſure, from whence ariſe averſion and deſire. The ſoul being engendered with the body, grows up and declines with it; their mutual faculties depend upon their union; and upon their ſeparation, action being at an end, thought and memory ceaſe.

A total diſbelief in a ſtate of future rewards and puniſhments, was the natural conſequence of theſe dogmas. Epicurus thought the notions entertained in this reſpect by his countrymen, of Tartarus, of Elyſian fields, and of a future judge of human actions, very unworthy of philoſophy, and very unneceſſary to our happineſs. He taught, that the ſtudy of nature, and of her laws, will produce tranquillity and peace, undiſturbed by vain and imaginary terrors: That we muſt not however expect to be perfectly happy; we are men, and not gods, and ſhould be contented with that degree of happineſs our imperfect being will admit of; that nature doth not

require

require to be corrected, but to be guided: that happineſs and pleaſure are ſynonymous; and that the practice of virtue affords the higheſt and moſt permanent pleaſure, and which alone poſſeſſes this peculiar property, that it may be conſtantly enjoyed: that the good of ſociety, and the love of mankind in general, ought to direct all our actions: that he who practiſes any one virtue to exceſs, neglecting his other duties, cannot be properly called virtuous:—our actions muſt be in harmony; as the muſician does not content himſelf with tuning one particular ſtring, all the tones muſt be in concord: that we may freely indulge thoſe pleaſures, that are not likely to produce any ill: and that a temporary ill muſt be ſuffered, in order to enſure a greater and more laſting pleaſure; but that it is the exceſs of weakneſs to yield to the temptation of any gratification, which may leave a greater or more permanent evil behind. To preſerve to ourſelves the power of enjoying

ſenſual pleaſures, we ought to be temperate in the uſe of them: That among civilized nations, and ſocieties connected together, men, from conſideration of the public good, ought to be decent in their conduct, and ſcrupulouſly obſerve ſuch rules and cuſtoms, as are eſtabliſhed to preſerve order and harmony in the community to which they belong.

The doctrines of Epicurus were ſo popular, that the Athenians erected a ſtatue to his memory; they made a very rapid progreſs, and ſoon found their way into Italy. They were greatly admired by the Romans, and ſuited perhaps the feelings of a refined and luxurious people better than thoſe of Zeno. Lucretius, Celſus, Pliny the elder, Lucan, and many other diſtinguiſhed Roman names, may be reckoned in the liſt of Epicureans; and the friend of Cicero, Pomponius Atticus, was a diſciple of the Epicurean Zeno of Sidon.

Such

Such are the principal features of thoſe doctrines in philoſophy which from the boſom of Athens ſpread themſelves over Greece and Italy, and at laſt found their way into the remoteſt parts of the Roman empire. Though ſeveral Greeks had written in favour of atheiſm; yet it ſeems to have made but little progreſs: even moſt of the Epicureans ſo far modified the original tenets of the ſect as to acknowledge the exiſtence of a Supreme Being; and upon the whole we may venture to conclude, that, towards the time of the appearance of Chriſt, men of learning in general were *deiſts*, and that only the people, and the ignorant, retained any reſpect for the ancient theology.

But however unanimous they may have been in their belief of the exiſtence and unity of one Supreme Being, they were exceedingly divided in their ſentiments concerning the nature and immortality of the

ſoul *. Many of the moſt eminent philoſophers treated the idea of a future ſtate as a fable, and thoſe who profeſſed ſuch a belief, diſagreed ſo widely among themſelves, that no *prevailing* opinion can be collected from their works. We find it a common maxim, that thoſe could not ſuffer, who did not exiſt; and, taking conſolation from an idea more ſhocking to nature than that of infernal puniſhment itſelf, they

* Plato dixit animam eſſentiam ſe moventem; Xenocrates numerum ſe moventem; Ariſtoteles, intellectum ſeu motum perpetuum; Pythagoras et Philolaus, harmoniam; Poſidonius, ideam; Aſclepiades, quinque ſenſuum exercitium ſibi conſonum; Hippocrates, ſpiritum tenuem per omne corpus diffuſum; Heraclitus Ponticus, lucem; Heraclitus Phyſicus, ſcintillam ſtellaris eſſentiæ; Zenon, concretum corpori ſpiritum; Democritus, ſpiritum inſertum atomis; Critolaus Peripateticus, conſtare eam de quinta eſſentia; Hipparchus, ignem; Anaximenes, aëra; Empedocles et Critias, ſanguinem; Parmenides, ex terra et igne; Xenophanes, ex terra et aqua; Epicurus, ſpeciem ex igne & aere & ſpiritu mixtam.

MACROBIUS *in Som. Scip. lib.* 1. *cap.* 14.

com-

compared death to a profound ſleep, undiſturbed by dreams, when we are unconſcious of exiſtence. Innumerable inſtances might be quoted, of the prevalence of theſe doubts among the philoſophers that flouriſhed ſhortly before, and ſoon after, the appearance of the chriſtian doctrines. A few inſtances may however ſuffice.

When Cæſar pleaded for ſome of the conſpirators engaged in the plot with Catiline, he ſaid, "that death was not, in fact, "any puniſhment, as it put an end to "thought and pain."

Even Cicero, after having ſhewn the errors and uncertainty of thoſe who had treated that ſubject, ſays, in an epiſtle to Torquatus, that "death puts an end to "thought and ſentiment;" in one to Terentius, "that death is the end of every "thing:" in another place, that "a firm and "elevated mind is free from care and un-"eaſineſs, and deſpiſes death, which only "places us in the ſtate in which we lay, be-

"fore

" fore we were born:" and publicly before the judges and people he aſſerted, that " by " death, we loſe all ſenſe of pain *."

Epictetus was of opinion, that after death we ſhall return to the ſource from whence we came, and be united with our primitive elements.

Strabo, in ſpeaking of the Brachmanes, ſays, " Texere etiam fabulas quaſdam, " quemadmodum Plato, de immortalitate " animæ, et de judiciis quæ apud inferos " fiunt, et alia hujuſmodi non pauca." STRABO, *lib.* XV.

Seneca writes in a letter to Marcia: " Cogita nullis defunctos malis affici illam

* Nam nunc quidem, quid tandem illi mali mors attulit? Niſi forte ineptiis et fabulis ducimur, ut exiſtimemus illum apud inferos impiorum ſupplicia perferre, ac plures illic offendiſſe inimicos, quam hic reliquiſſe: a ſocrus, ab uxorum, a fratris, a liberum pœnis, actum eſſe præcipitem in ſceleratorum ſedem atque regionem, quæ ſi falſa ſunt, *id quod omnes intelligunt*, quid ei tandem aliud mors eripuit, præter ſenſum doloris. CICERO *pro Cluent.*

" quæ

" quæ nobis inferos faciunt terribiles,
" fabulam eſſe, nullas imminere mortuis
" tenebras nec carcerem, nec flumina fla-
" grantia igne, nec oblivionis amnem,
" nec tribunalia et reos. Luſerunt iſta
" poetæ, et vanis nos agitavere terroribus.
" Mors omnium dolorum et ſolutio eſt et
" finis, ultra quam mala noſtra non exeunt,
" quæ nos in illam tranquillitatem, in qua
" antequam naſceremur jacuimus reponit.
" Si mortuorum aliquis miſeretur cur et
" non natorum miſereatur." SENECA, *de Conſol. ad Marciam, cap.* 19.

The ſame philoſopher, in one of his tragedies, publicly exhibited before the people, avows the opinion expreſſed above *.

The

---

* Verum eſt? an timidos fabula decipit?
Umbras corporibus vivere conditis?
An toti morimur, nullaque pars manet noſtri?
S. Poſt mortem nihil eſt, ipſaque mors nihil:
Velocis ſpatii meta noviſſima.
Spem ponant avidi, ſoliciti metum

Quæris

The ſentiments of Pliny are very plainly expreſſed in the following paſſage: "Om-
" nibus a ſuprema die eadem, quæ ante
" primum, nec magis a morte ſenſus ullus,
" aut corporis, aut animæ, quam ante
" natalem. Eadem enim vanitas in
" futurum etiam ſe propagat, et in mortis
" quoque tempora ipſa ſibi vitam mentitur,
" alias immortalitatem animæ, alias tranſ-
" figurationem, alias ſenſum inferis dando,
" & manes colendo:—ceu vera ullo modo
" ſpirandi ratio homini a ceteris animalibus
" diſtet." PLIN. *Hiſt. lib. 7. cap. 56.*

Many other inſtances might be brought, to prove that the belief of the mortality of the ſoul was very prevalent; and that the notions of thoſe who profeſſed a contrary

---

Quæris quo jaceas poſt obitum loco?
Quo non nata jacent. ———
Mors individua eſt, noxia corpori
Nec parcens animæ. *Troad. Act* II. *Chorus.*

opinion

opinion were often contradictory and confuſed, and always without rational proof. Yet every one who reflected, muſt have been conſcious of an intelligent principle within him, anxious to explore this important but impenetrable ſecret, and in ſome meaſure intuitively convinced of its ſuperiority to its preſent ſtate, and of its exiſtence in another. But though the very exiſtence of ſuch a principle, and the variety of reaſons it diſcovered to prove its immortality, led him to believe it; other arguments offered doubt; he ſaw the mortal frame conſtantly expoſed to danger, its natural diſſolution gradually approaching, and even the faculties of the mind partaking of the decay of the body; he ſaw the friend that he cheriſhed, or the object he loved, conſumed to aſhes, or expoſed to more humiliating corruption. Did they exiſt who were gone?—Was he yet to ſee them?—Was he to exiſt himſelf?—Or was the ſcene to be eternally cloſed, and all

our affections, and thoſe mental powers, on which we vainly pride ourſelves, to be diſſolved in nothing? A variety of anxious thoughts preſſed upon the mind; and, in the impatience of agonizing doubt, it ſeemed diſpoſed to arraign the juſtice of the Supreme Being, for having given faculties to inquire into that awful queſtion, yet inſufficient to reſolve it.

In the midſt of this doubt and ſolicitude, Chriſtianity was announced, declaring the veil which covered that myſtery to be removed, and, out of compaſſion to mankind, the certainty of a future ſtate to be revealed by God himſelf. The pleaſing proſpect was held out to all claſſes of men indifferently; no diſtinction was made between the emperor and the ſlave; happineſs and miſery depended on the firmneſs of belief in the doctrines, and the practice of the injunctions, of Chriſt, the morality of which, though conſonant to, yet far ſurpaſſed in purity, the precepts of

thoſe wiſe and virtuous philoſophers who had already inſtructed mankind. Not leſs flattering than the proſpect of the immortality of the ſoul, was that of the reſurrection of the body, and this doctrine may perhaps likewiſe have aſſiſted the more immediate cauſes of the rapid advancement of Chriſtianity *.

The greateſt difficulty in the way of converſion, ſeems to have been the myſtery by which God had conveyed his will to man, which, being above human comprehenſion, could not be explained, and was therefore either to be rejected or believed; but, in rejecting that, men muſt alſo have rejected the authority on which their expectation of a future ſtate was founded.

The early Chriſtians ſupported their faith with great purity of manners; which, with the examples of the martyrs, muſt

* Though the belief of the reſurrection of the body was profeſſed by all the Jews, except the Sadducees; it does not ſeem to have been entertained by any of the Greeks and Romans.

MINISTRY OF CULTURE · GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
सत्यमेव जयते · भारत सरकार

have greatly contributed to obtain belief, and to ſupply the place of argument. The mind is naturally diſpoſed to compaſſionate thoſe who ſuffer; their words and actions have more than ordinary weight. The martyrs ſubmitted to all the torments which cruelty could invent, with patience and reſignation; rejected every offer of relief, when propoſed to them on condition of their denying their faith in Chriſt: they met death itſelf with indifference, and in their laſt moments ſhewed the fulleſt perſuaſion that they were only going to quit a mortal and inconvenient frame, to enjoy more perfect happineſs.

Triumph of ſpirit over matter

That theſe cauſes conſiderably contributed to the advancement of Chriſtianity, may be obſerved from the little progreſs it has made in Hindoſtan. The Hindoos reſpect their own religion, believe in a future ſtate, and perſecution is entirely contrary to their doctrines. Notwithſtanding the labours of miſſionaries, therefore, for upwards of

two

two centuries, and the eſtabliſhment of different chriſtian nations, who ſupport and protect them, out of perhaps one hundred millions of Hindoos, there are not twelve thouſand Chriſtians, and thoſe almoſt entirely *Chandarahs*, or outcaſts.

The early Chriſtians ſeem to have been without any ſettled hierarchy, and without any eſtabliſhed forms of religious worſhip. Diſperſed in the different cities of the empire, they formed themſelves into ſocieties, who were only connected with each other by profeſſing the ſame belief, and being expoſed to equal danger. When the members of theſe ſocieties occaſionally met together, any one ſpoke who felt himſelf ſo diſpoſed; and the firſt appearance of diſtinction or precedence we can find, was the chuſing of preſbyters or elders, to whom was entruſted the care of aſſembling the members at fit times; of watching over their manners; and of aſſiſting their diſtreſſed brethren from the voluntary con-

tributions of the ſociety. As the number of proſelytes increaſed, further and more permanent regulations were thought neceſſary; and the next ſtep to higher preferment that is recorded, was the election of certain perſons among the preſbyters, to preſide at the aſſemblies, to collect the reſult of their deliberations, and who, in the interim of their meetings, had the power of receiving and applying alms, and of correſponding with the ſocieties eſtabliſhed in other places. The name given to theſe was *Epiſcopi*, a term we find equally applied to perſons in different truſts, and which literally ſignified an inſpector or ſuperintendant *. In the proceſs of time, the functions of religious worſhip were entirely committed to theſe, and to their inferior

* The title of Pope *(Papa)* was originally given indiſcriminately to all biſhops and patriarchs, and it was only towards the end of the 11th century that Gregory the VIIth obtained, at a council held at Rome, that this appellation ſhould be confined to that ſee. In the Greek church the ancient mode continues to this day.

aſſiſtants;

assistants; and hence arose the distinction of the *clergy* from the *laity*, or the great bulk of the Christians. With the augmentation of the number and quality of the Christians, the situation of the clergy became naturally more important; fresh ceremonies were gradually introduced to render the worship more splendid; from the supposed examples in the earlier ages of Christianity, and by forced interpretations of the sacred writings, a variety of pious duties were invented, of little use perhaps for the good of mankind, but calculated to obtain and preserve that dominion of the priesthood, by which it so long kept every other order of men in a state of the most abject subjection.—It was the slavery of the mind.—Philosophy and the arts, which had already been considerably affected by the influence of the new religion, were lost under the inundations of barbarians that overwhelmed the Roman empire. The small degree of uncouth learning which yet remained, being

entirely in the poſſeſſion of the prieſts, conſiderably contributed to confirm their influence over the rude and uninſtructed laity, and to maintain and extend ſuperſtition, which, from the earlieſt times, they ſeem to have foſtered with unwearied pains. Their aſcendancy being eſtabliſhed without oppoſition or control, they not only commanded in ſpiritual matters, but directed in worldly affairs with imperious interference. Intoxicated with the ſubmiſſion that was everywhere ſhewn to their aſſumed authority, they often committed ſuch wanton and extravagant acts of power, that we are frequently loſt in amazement, between the inſolence of thoſe who commanded, and the folly of thoſe who obeyed them. But, in the plenitude of their power, and in the enjoyment of the immenſe wealth they had by various means acquired, they neglected to obſerve that exterior decorum with which their conduct had been formerly clothed, and furniſhed examples

examples of very licentious and diſorderly manners. The people in ſome countries, notwithſtanding their infatuation, began to remark this, and to murmur: the higher ranks of men were already diſpoſed to reſiſtance. The invention of printing, about the middle of the fifteenth century, brought forth ſcience from its dark retreat within the walls of monaſteries, from whence it had ſhed a faint light upon the univerſal barbariſm of the age. Superſtition declined, in proportion to the progreſs made by letters; phænomena, that had been employed to awe the ignorant, were found to proceed from natural cauſes; and the minds of every claſs of men imbibed ſome part of that knowledge, which now began to diffuſe itſelf all over Europe.

Controverſy ſeems to be the conſtant companion of religion:—it was almoſt coëval with our faith. But early in the ſixteenth century it broke out with uncommon violence; and the diſputes of church-

men were carried on with ſo much acrimony and imprudence, that by means of the preſs, the whole arcana of the policy and abuſes of the prieſthood were laid open to the inquiry and judgment of the laity.

In order to cruſh the new opinions, which in conſequence of theſe diſputes began to appear, and to ſpread themſelves in many parts of Europe, the Roman pontiff had recourſe to violent and injudicious meaſures. Anathemas and excommunications were pronounced againſt all who encouraged or profeſſed them; and the princes of Chriſtendom were called upon to exert their power and authority to eradicate and deſtroy them. But, as is generally the caſe when perſecution is employed to oppoſe reaſon, it decided thoſe who were wavering, and made men more poſitive in their reſiſtance. The proteſtant doctrines ſpread with uncommon rapidity, and operated, wherever they gained ground, not

MINISTRY OF CULTURE · GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
सत्यमेव जयते · भारत सरकार

only to effect eccleſiaſtical, but likewiſe the moſt important political changes. But during the ſtruggle that preceded them, Europe, for a long ſpace of time, exhibited the moſt extraordinary and moſt melancholy ſcene that is to be found in the hiſtory of mankind. It was a general ſtate of religious frenzy. The fire of perſecution was lighted up from one extremity of Chriſtendom to the other; and men ſaw their fellow-creatures and citizens committed to the flames, not only without remorſe, but with pleaſure and exultation. All the bonds of ſocial life were broken; and bigotry and fanaticiſm were buſily employed to ſmother the feelings of nature, and the ſentiments of loyalty, of gratitude, and of friendſhip. Sovereigns deſcended from the throne to be the bloody aſſaſſins of their people *, or drove them to abandon their

* Fifty thouſand inhabitants of the Low Countries are ſuppoſed to have been put to death on account of

their own, and ſeek refuge in other countries. Confidence and ſafety were nowhere to be found; for neither rank nor merit, neither obligations conferred, nor connections of blood, afforded any ſecurity. The oſtenſible cauſe of theſe enormities was religion, and the real and true objects of religion were forgotten. Men, apparently deprived of their reaſon, in the wild courſe of their miſtaken zeal, never ſtopped to recollect that they were acting in diſobedience to the laws of that God whom they pretended to ſerve, and in oppoſition to the doctrines they affected to profeſs, which inculcate charity, benevolence, compaſſion, and indulgence for the errors and infirmities of others.

---

their religious principles, only during the reign of Charles V. The number ſeems almoſt incredible, but it is affirmed by ſeveral cotemporary hiſtorians. Yet Charles was milder and leſs bigotted than his ſon and ſucceſſor Philip. The maſſacre in the night of St. Bartholomew at Paris, and ſimilar ſcenes of horror in different parts of Europe, ſhew to what length a blind zeal can carry an unenlightened people.

But

But the charm that formerly rendered the minds of men capable of receiving with reverence any dogma that was preſcribed to them, being broken, every one who was ſo inclined, commented upon and explained the ſacred writings according to his own particular notions: and from among the Reformers aroſe a variety of ſects, as intolerant towards each other, as the church of Rome was towards thoſe who had emancipated themſelves from its authority. The laity, who hitherto had been kept in profound ignorance, eſpecially on religious ſubjects, eagerly read the books of controverſy, and felt their vanity conſiderably flattered, in being at liberty to diſcuſs and give their opinions on ſubjects which but lately it would have been criminal for them to have inquired into. They became accuſtomed to ſtudy and inveſtigation. The liberty that was given to the preſs in the countries where the Proteſtant religion prevailed, and eſpecially in thoſe which enjoyed

joyed a free government, enabled men of genius to examine things with freedom, and to expreſs themſelves without reſtraint. Philoſophy and the ſciences, even in the midſt of civil and religious revolutions, were making conſiderable progreſs; and theſe, and the improvements in navigation, which led to the diſcovery of other countries and other people, tended to expand the mind, and make men more liberal in their notions. The increaſe of circulating wealth, produced by the extenſion of commerce, and the gold and ſilver that were poured into Europe from America, the eaſy communication that was eſtabliſhed between different countries, and the facility of exchanging their reſpective productions, produced new and varied wants and pleaſures. The ſtudious, the induſtrious, and the diſſipated part of mankind, found each ſufficient occupation. The ſweets of ſocial life became more numerous and refined; public tranquillity was neceſſary to the enjoyment of them;

them; and men grew averſe to fierce civil broils, and indifferent about religious conteſts.

But as men unfortunately often proceed from one extreme to the other; as formerly it was the faſhion to ſeek fame by wild and extravagant acts of devotion, ſo of late years ſome have imagined that they evince a ſuperiority of genius, by affecting to have no religion. But without entering into the arguments either of ſceptics or divines, it will always afford comfort to the humble believer, to reflect, that the moſt profound metaphyſicians, the beſt philoſophers of this or any age, and thoſe who have made the greateſt progreſs in the ſciences, were not only exemplary in their moral characters, but that their writings tend, while they enlighten the mind, to increaſe our veneration for the Supreme Being. The further they proceeded in their diſcoveries, the more they adored the Creator of the univerſe,

MINISTRY OF CULTURE · GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
GSL

univerſe, and perceived the inſufficiency of human wiſdom to find out or explain his ways.

In ſome more modern writers we find the power of fancy, and the force of ridicule, employed to deprive mankind of its greateſt conſolation, and ſociety of its beſt ſupport; nor can we perceive any motive for ſuch an endeavour, but licentious vanity ſeeking after a criminal diſtinction. It is ſaid to have been an obſervation of Mr. Addiſon, that he never knew a profeſſed free-thinker, but who upon inquiry was found to have ſomething vicious in his moral character; and that the attempt to diſturb others with his doubts or notions, was in itſelf a proof of a perverted diſpoſition.

Had we the ſame data to go upon in examining the hiſtory of the Hindoo religion, we might probably follow the pure worſhip of an almighty, juſt, and merciful

ciful God, through all its ſtages of corruption to its preſent complicated ſtate, by nearly the ſame ſteps in which we have ſeen the plain and mild ſyſtem of Chriſtianity ſo widely deviate from its original purity. The following Sketches may perhaps enable the reader to form ſome judgment upon this ſubject; and whatever reaſon we may have to conſider the religion we profeſs as a peculiar revelation of God, we ought to look upon the ſincere believers of another, with leſs ſeverity than men in general have done. To hate or deſpiſe any people, becauſe they do not profeſs the ſame faith with ourſelves; to judge them illiberally, and arrogantly to condemn them, is, perhaps, in fact, to arraign the wiſdom and goodneſs of the Almighty.

MINISTRY OF CULTURE · GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
संस्कृति मंत्रालय · भारत सरकार
GSL

SKETCH II.

Sources of Information concerning Hindoſtan.

IN tracing the progreſs of the arts and ſciences, we have been accuſtomed to conſider Egypt as the country which gave them birth; but an opinion has lately been entertained, that they were probably brought thither from Hindoſtan. An analogy has been diſcovered between the religion of the Hindoos and Egyptians; a ſimilarity is found in ſome of their cuſtoms; and a certain acquaintance with the ſame ſciences, ſeems to have been common to both. To wreſt an honour from the Egyptians which they have ſo long and ſo peaceably enjoyed, to ſurmount the prejudices that are in their favour, and to

over-

overturn an opinion that has been confirmed by the ſanction of ſo many ages, ſeems a work ſo replete with difficulty, that I think no one who ſhall attempt it, ſhould flatter himſelf with hopes of complete ſucceſs. When opinions are once adopted, men ſeldom go fairly in queſt of truth; there is always a bias to theſe; they generally look for what may ſtrengthen, and receive unwillingly what may combat them.

In our early youth we imbibe, with claſſic learning, a degree of veneration for the Egyptians, and hence a predilection in their favour, that will probably remain with us during our lives. We obſerved the arts and ſciences coming from Egypt, and ſpreading themſelves in thoſe countries, to which we always look back with a degree of enthuſiaſm; it never entered our imagination to go beyond that, and to ſeek their origin in a more diſtant clime, but we gave up our admiration to the people, to whom

whom the Greeks themſelves owed that inſtruction which rendered them ſuperior to other nations.

From Greek and Roman authors we learn but little of the Hindoos; and the attention they excite in hiſtory ſeems rather to ariſe from their having been conquered by ſome great hero, or mentioned by ſome favourite writer, than from their own conſequence as a nation. We were indifferent about a people of whom we had ſcarce any knowledge. But the deſire of conqueſt and the thirſt of gain having brought us to a more intimate acquaintance with them, and the ſpirit of inquiry being rouſed, we go back with avidity to thoſe paſſages which had left but a ſlight impreſſion, and are ſurpriſed to ſee the ſame manners and cuſtoms, the ſame religion and laws, exiſting and now in uſe, which we find to have prevailed at the remoteſt period we can trace.

Though

Though it be almoſt three centuries ſince Europeans firſt navigated to the Eaſt Indies, it is but a very few years ſince ſuch inquiries were ſet on foot, as could lead us to any ſatisfactory information concerning a people, who perhaps merit the attention of the curious, more than any other nation on the globe. But happily, the obſcurity in which they were involved ſeems gradually to be diſſipating, and we may now flatter ourſelves that we are in the way to obtain a knowledge of all that is to be learnt of their hiſtory. How far that may extend, is yet uncertain; but the lights which have already been obtained, ſufficiently ſhew them to have excelled as a civilized and poliſhed nation, before any other that we are acquainted with.

We are informed that Mr. Haſtings, ſoon after his appointment to the government of Bengal, conceived the idea of procuring a code of the laws and cuſtoms of the Hin-

doos, with an intention to conciliate their affections, by paying a proper regard to their inſtitutions and prejudices. For this purpoſe he invited from Benares, and other parts of the country, Bramins learned in the Sanſkreet language; the moſt authentic materials were collected, and tranſlated from the original text into the Perſian idiom. The Bramins began the work in May 1773, and finiſhed it in February 1775 *.

A ſociety was ſome years afterwards eſtabliſhed at Calcutta, in order to make inquiries into the civil and natural hiſtory, antiquities, ſciences, and literature of Aſia, which, we are told, has made conſiderable progreſs; and that the preſident, Sir William Jones, as well as ſome of its other members, are now ſufficiently acquainted with the Sanſkreet language to be able to tranſlate it with facility.

* It was tranſlated from the Perſian into Engliſh by Mr. Halhed.

Of

Of the local ſtate of the country, the beſt account we yet have, is to be found in a *Map* and *Memoir*, publiſhed by Major Rennel, who was ſeveral years ſurveyor-general of Bengal and the other provinces that are ſubject to that government. Beſides the ſurveys and inquiries made by Major Rennel and other profeſſional men, our geographical knowledge has been greatly improved in conſequence of the embaſſies ſent from Calcutta to Thibet and Poonah, and the marches of our armies in the late war with the Mahrattas, acroſs the peninſula from the Ganges to Guzerat. Men of ſcience having accompanied the embaſſy to Poonah, and ſerved in thoſe armies, the preciſe ſituation of particular places, with their directions and diſtances from each other, were accurately aſcertained.

I am indebted for much curious, as well as uſeful, information to Lieutenant Colonel Polier, Mr. John Stuart, and Mr. George

Foſter. Lieutenant Colonel Polier reſided near thirty years in Hindoſtan, part of which he ſpent at Delhy, and its neighbourhood. Mr. Stuart * and Mr.

---

* Mr. Stuart went from Maſulipatam to Hydrobad, the capital of the Nizam's dominions, and from thence to Seringapatam, the capital of Myſore, in which country he remained fourteen months. He came from thence to Madras. In his ſecond journey, he went from thence to Hydrobad, Aurengabad, Jynagur, Delhy, through the Panjab, to within ſixteen miles of Lahore. He returned to Delhy, and came by the way of Oude and Benares to Calcutta. After remaining ſome time in Bengal and Bahar, he went by ſea down the Perſian Gulf, and from Grey, at the mouth of the Euphrates, croſſed the deſert in the wideſt diagonal part to Aleppo, and, embarking at Scandaroon, came to England. In 1783, he went to Moſcow, with the intention of going through Tartary to India, but finding it difficult to procure a paſſport for proceeding from Aſtracan, he came by the way of Vienna to Italy, and went from thence by ſea to Conſtantinople. Going by Diarbukkeer (or Meſopotamia), Moſul, and Kirkout, to Bagdat, he went from thence into Perſia. After ſtaying ſome months at Iſpahan, Sheeras, &c. he came to Baſſorah, and from thence through Annadolia (or Natolia) to Conſtantinople and Vienna. He has ſince then viſited Swediſh Lapland, above a degree farther north than Torno, and is now proſecuting his travels through thoſe parts of Europe he has not yet ſeen.

Foſter

Foſter* have viſited more of the interior parts of India than any other Engliſhman I have heard of; and thoſe gentlemen, by ſpeaking fluently ſome of the Oriental languages, and by living in habits of intimacy with the natives, have been able to learn things we were unacquainted with, and to explain others which ſeem to have been miſapprehended †.

But the honour is due to the French, of having firſt brought out from the receſſes of the

* Mr. Foſter went from Madras by land to Calcutta, from thence to Benares, Agra, Delhy, &c. to Kaſhimire, where he ſtaid ſeveral months, and going by Cabul through Perſia, came by the Caſpian Sea to Ruſſia, and from thence to England.

† Though much miſcellaneous information concerning the Hindoos may be found in the different authors of our own and other nations, who have written on Hindoſtan, none that I am acquainted with, have made *them* the objects of their immediate and impartial inquiry. Indeed, until now, the ſources of information have been uncertain and confined; but, at preſent, as we have got poſſeſſion of the key to knowledge, the *Sanſkreet language*, and of the country where its chief repoſitory is ſuppoſed to be, we may

the Hindoo temples, and communicated to the world in a regular and ſcientific manner, the aſtronomy of the Bramins, of which, till then, we had but vague and uncertain notions. It was *Le Voyage dans les Mers de l'Inde*, by Monſieur le Gentil *, that firſt enabled us to form a right conception of it, and to perceive thoſe characteriſtic marks which diſtinguiſh it from that of other nations. Since then, it has been more fully illuſtrated, in a moſt ingenious and learned treatiſe, by Monſieur Bailly †.

---

expect, from the zeal and abilities of Sir W. Jones, and the other members of the ſociety of Calcutta, to have our curioſity gratified, upon better and more authentic grounds.

* See *Voyage dans les Mers de l'Inde*, fait par Ordre du Roi, a l'occaſion du Paſſage de Venus ſur le Diſque du Soleil le 6 Juin 1761, et le 3 du même Mois 1769, par Monſieur le Gentil, de l'Academie des Sciences.

† See *Traité de l'Aſtronomie Indienne et Orientale*, par Monſieur Bailly, de l'Academie Françoiſe des Inſcriptions et Belles Lettres, des Sciences, &c.

Whether

Whether the Egyptians received it from the Hindoos, may be a ſubject of farther inquiry; but if, after a careful examination of the pretenſions of the latter, we are obliged to allow them to be the inventors of a ſcience that requires ſo much ingenuity and obſervation, we ſhall be inclined to ſuppoſe that they were likewiſe the authors of that mythology which will be found to bear ſo great a reſemblance to that of the ancients.

SKETCH III.

Sketch of the Hiſtory of Hindoſtan.

THE learned Hindoos ſay, that Hindoſtan *, extending from the river Indus † on the weſt, to the Barampooter

---

* Hindoſtan, ſo called by foreigners, probably from the river Indus; but in the Sanſkreet writings it is generally called *Bharat-virſh*, or *Bharatkhant*. *Bharat* is ſaid to have been the name of one of their ancient emperors, and *Khant* ſignifies a large tract of country.

† From the city of Attock, in lat. 30. 20. to Moultan; this river is called Attock, which in the Sanſkreet language ſignifies, *Forbidden*, as it was the boundary of Hindoſtan on that ſide, and unlawful for the Hindoos to go beyond it without permiſſion. (Mr. Foſter, Major Rennel, &c.) Below Moultan it is called Soor, until it divides itſelf into a number of ſtreams near to Tatta; the principal one is called Mehran;

MINISTRY OF CULTURE · GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
सत्यमेव जयते · भारत सरकार

pooter * on the eaſt, and from the mountains of Thibet on the north, to the ſea on the

---

Mehran; but the river, when generally ſpoken of, is called in the Sanſkreet language, Sindhoo, and vulgarly Sinde. By Europeans it has, from the earlieſt times, been called Indus. (Pliny ſays, "Indus ab incolis "appellatus," &c. Lib. vi.)

* A river eaſt of the Ganges, which in Sanſkreet is called Brimha-pooter, or the ſon of Brimha. Theſe two rivers derive their ſources from the mountains of Thibet, from whence they proceed in oppoſite directions, the Ganges to the weſt, and the Barampooter to the eaſt. The Ganges, after wandering through different valleys, ruſhes through an opening in the mountains at Hudwar, and flows in a ſmooth navigable ſtream, in a courſe of about 1350 miles, through the plains of Hindoſtan to the ſea. In its way it receives eleven capital rivers, ſome of them equal in magnitude to the Rhine. From its arrival on the plains at Hudwar to the conflux with the Jumna, its bed is in moſt places about a mile and a quarter wide; from thence its courſe becomes more winding: about 600 miles from the ſea, its bed in the broadeſt part is three miles over, in the narroweſt half a mile, the ſtream increaſing and decreaſing according to the ſeaſons. In the ſummer months it is fordable in ſome places above the conflux with the Jumna; but the navigation for ſmall veſſels is never entirely interrupted: below the conflux, the depth is much more conſiderable,

the ſouth; acknowledged the dominion of one mighty ſovereign: but that in this immenſe

---

able, as the additional ſtreams add more to that, than to its breadth. At the diſtance of 500 miles from the ſea, the channel is 30 feet deep when the river is at the loweſt: but the ſudden and great expanſion of the ſtream, depriving it of ſufficient force to ſweep away the ſand and mud that is thrown acroſs it by the ſtrong ſoutherly winds, the principal branch cannot be entered by large veſſels. About 220 miles from the ſea in a ſtrait direction, but 300 in following the windings of the river, the branches called the rivers Caſſembazar and Jellinghy, unite, and form the river Hughly, on which is the port of Calcutta. The navigation of ſhips in this river is always dangerous, as the ſand-banks frequently ſhift, and ſome project ſo far into the ſea, that the channels between them cannot be eaſily traced. The medium rate of motion of the Ganges is about three miles, and during the rains, and while the waters flow into it from the inundated lands, from five to ſix miles an hour. In general, there is on one ſide of the river an almoſt perpendicular bank, more or leſs elevated above the ſtream according to the quantity of water: near the bank the water is naturally deepeſt; on the oppoſite ſide, as the bed ſlopes gradually, the water is ſhallow, even at ſome diſtance from the margin: but this is the natural effect of the windings of great rivers, the current being always ſtrongeſt at the external ſide of the curve.

In

menſe empire there were ſeveral hereditary kings, who paid him a certain tribute, though

---

In places where the ſtream is remarkably rapid, and the ſoil looſe, ſuch tracts of land are ſometimes ſwept away as would aſtoniſh thoſe who have not been accuſtomed to ſee the increaſe and force of ſome rivers, during and immediately after the periodical rains in the tropical regions. The effects of the ſtream at thoſe curves, ſometimes produce a gradual change in the courſe of rivers, and in proportion as they encroach on one ſide, they quit the other. Hence there are inſtances in Hindoſtan, of towns ſaid by ancient authors to be ſituated on the banks of rivers, that are now at a conſiderable diſtance from them. The Hindoos, in their fabulous account of the Ganges, ſay, that it flows from the foot of Viſhnou, the preſerving deity, and in entering Hindoſtan, paſſes through a rock, reſembling the head of their ſacred animal, the cow. The Britiſh nation, with its tributaries, enjoy the whole of its navigable courſe.

The Barampooter, taking an almoſt oppoſite direction, runs through Thibet, where it is called Sampoo, or Zianciu, which is ſaid to bear the ſame interpretation with the Gunga or Ganges of Hindoſtan, *the river*. It waſhes the border of the territory of Laſſa, and approaching to within about 200 miles of Yunan, the weſternmoſt province of China, turns ſuddenly back, and running through Aſſam, enters Bengal on the N. E. During a courſe of 400 miles through

though they, in the internal government of their countries, were independent*.

One of the ancient dynaſties of their emperors is called the Sourage-buns, or the dynaſty of the children of the ſun; the other the Chander-buns, or that of the children of the moon.

After theſe we hear of the houſe of Bhharat; and the wars between two of its branches, the Kooroos and the Pandoos,

---

through Bengal, it ſo much reſembles the Ganges, that a deſcription of one, may ſerve for both, excepting that for the laſt 60 miles before their junction, it forms a ſtream from four to five miles wide. The waters of thoſe great rivers being joined, form a gulph of conſiderable extent, interſperſed with iſlands, ſome of them ſeveral leagues in circumference.

Major RENNEL.

* Diodorus Siculus ſays, "India in quatuor latera diſtincta eſt; quod ad orientem, quodve ad meridiem vergit, magnum mare circumdat. Quod arctos ſpectat Hæmodus mons ab ea Scythia quam habitant hi, qui appellantur Sacæ dividit; quartum, quod eſt ad occidentem fluvius Indus terminat, omnium fere poſt Nilum maximus. Magnitudinem Indiæ ab oriente ad occaſum, ſcribunt ſtadiorum viginti octo millium duorum et triginta. *Lib.* II. *cap.* x.

are

are the ſubject of a celebrated epic poem, called the Mahabharat *, ſaid to have been written by Kreſhna Dwypayen Veiâs, a learned Bramin, above 4000 years ago. A famous battle, fought on the plains of Delhy, at the beginning of Kaly-Youg, or the preſent age, 3102 years before Chriſt, gave, to Arjoon, one of the five ſons of Pandoo, and favourite of the god Viſhnou, the empire of Bharatvirſh, or Hindoſtān.

About 1600 years before Chriſt, a war with the Perſians is recorded; and about 900 years after that, another is mentioned during which the Hindoo emperor is ſaid to have been carried priſoner into Perſia, and his ſon, who ſucceeded him, to have become tributary to the kings of that country. The tribute having been withheld by the ſecond Phoor or Porus, is

* The Bhag-vat Geeta, which is an epiſode of this poem, has been tranſlated from the Sanſkreet language by Mr. Charles Wilkins. It contains dialogues between Arjoon and Kriſhna, who is ſuppoſed to have been the god Viſhnou in one of his incarnations.

aſſigned

assigned as the cause of the invasion of India by Alexander. Some Hindoo writers mention the victory obtained by him over Phoor, and say that he quitted Hindostan on account of a mutiny in his army*.

From the return of Alexander, to the first invasion of the Mahomedans, it appears that several revolutions among the different branches of the reigning family had taken place; and that many of the tributary princes, taking advantage of these convulsions, became independent. The country thereby lay open to easy conquest; those princes were unwilling to appeal to a sovereign for protection, whose yoke they had shaken off; and invaders, instead of meeting a united people, and having to contend with the force of the whole empire, seem only to have been separately opposed by those whose territories they happened to enter.

---

* Pliny says; "Colliguntur a libero patre ad "Alexandrum magnum, reges eorum CLIV annis "VI,M,CCCCII adjiciunt et menses tres."

The rapid expedition of Alexander ſcarce produced any other change in Hindoſtan, than what aroſe from the pillage of ſome of its towns, and the deſtruction of ſome thouſands of its inhabitants. But the invaſions of the Mogul Tartars overturned the Hindoo empire, and, beſides the calamities that immediately attend conqueſt, fixed on ſucceeding generations a laſting train of miſeries. They brought along with them the ſpirit of a haughty ſuperſtition, they exacted the converſion of the vanquiſhed, and they came to conquer, and to remain. The ſucceſs of the firſt invaders invited many to follow them; but we may conſider the expedition of Tamerlane as that which completed the ruin of the Hindoo government. Having, in the year 1398, ſent his ſon Mirza Pir Mahomed before him, he entered India himſelf, relieved Mirza, who had taken, but was afterwards ſhut up in Moultan, defeated the armies of the Mahomedan king of Delhy,

Delhy, and made himſelf maſter of his capital. Wherever he appeared he was victorious, neither Muſſulman nor Hindoo could reſiſt his fortune, neither in the field, nor in towns; nor could any one who oppoſed him expect his mercy.

He marked the march of his army with blood, from the banks of the Attock to the eaſtern ſide of the Ganges, and from thence back by a different route, he returned to Samarcand.

The diſappearance of this angry meteor, was followed by a long ſcene of warfare among the Mahomedan invaders themſelves; and the firſt of the deſcendants of Tamerlane who may be ſaid to have firmly eſtabliſhed himſelf on the throne of Delhy, was Acbar. He ſucceeded his father Homaon in 1556, and died in 1605, after a ſucceſsful reign of about fifty years. He conſiderably extended the dominion of the Mahomedans, and was the firſt of their princes who regularly divided the empire into

into *Soubadaries*, or viceroyſhips, ſome of which were equal in extent to the largeſt European kingdoms. Over each of theſe he appointed a ſoubadar, or viceroy. The ſoubadaries were again divided into provinces, governed by naibs, or nabobs, who, though ſubject to the ſoubadar, had, however, the privilege of immediately correſponding with the emperor's miniſter; the deciſion of civil cauſes belonged to the Cadi; the revenues and expences were inſpected by a perſon appointed from the court; and the government of the principal forts was confided to officers who were independent of the viceroy.

During his long reign, Acbar cauſed inquiries to be made, to aſcertain the population, and the natural productions and manufactures of the different provinces; the reſult of which, with various regulations ariſing therefrom, were formed into a book called the *Ayin Acbaree*, or inſtitutes of Acbar, which ſtill exiſts in the Perſian

language. He endeavoured to correct the ferocity of his countrymen; was indulgent to the religion and customs of the Hindoos; and, wishing to revive the learning of the Brahmans, which had been persecuted as profane by the ignorant Mufftis, he ordered the celebrated observatory at Benares to be repaired, invited the Brahmans to return to their studies, and assured them of his protection.

The dominion of Acbar does not seem to have extended south, beyond the 21st degree of latitude. From thence southward, a great part of the country was still subject to a very powerful Hindoo prince, to whom many great Rajahs* paid tribute. The last of these Princes dying without issue, most of his territories submitted to usurpers, and to the Mahomedan princes of Golcon-

* Princes, or Nobles, very much resembling the great Nobility in Europe under the feudal governments. *Rajah* is derived from a Sanskrit word, signifying *splendor*.

dah

dah and Viziapour, who had ſerved as generals in his army.

Aurengzebe, ſon of Shaw Gehān, the grandſon of Acbar, completed the conqueſt of many countries that his predeceſſors had in vain attempted to ſubdue. On his return from the Deckan, he ordered the city of Aurengabad to be built, to commemorate his victories *. His dominions, according to Major Rennell, reached from the 10th to the 35th degree of north latitude, and was, at the broadeſt part, of nearly an equal extent. His revenue is calculated to have been about thirty-five millions of pounds ſterling:—an aſtoniſhing ſum, eſpecially in a country where the productions of the earth that are neceſſary for the ſupport of man, are ſcarcely above a third of the price that the neceſſaries of life bear in England †.

Aurengzebe

* His firſt wife is buried there, to whoſe memory he erected a moſque, and a magnificent tomb.

† Beſides the difference in the price of food, it muſt be conſidered that the native of Hindoſtan has no

Aurengzebe died in 1707, after a reign of forty-nine years; and though, to attain the throne, he confined his father to his ſeraglio, murdered his brothers, and was guilty of many other enormities; yet, being once eſtabliſhed on it, and ſeeing no competitors, he paid ſuch cloſe attention to the affairs of government, and to the impartial adminiſtration of juſtice, was ſo judicious in his political conduct, and ſucceſsful in his wars, that he deſerves to be ranked with the ableſt princes who have ever reigned in any age or country.

It was the policy of the court of Delhy frequently to change the viceroys. A hiſtorian relates, that one of them left the city, ſitting with his back towards the head of the elephant; and on being aſked the reaſon, replied, That it was to look out for his ſucceſſor. The vaſt diſtance of ſome of

---

farther occaſion for fuel than what may be neceſſary to prepare his temperate meal; nor for clothing to guard him againſt inclemencies that are unknown in thoſe mild regions.

the

the provinces from the throne, ſuggeſted the propriety of this meaſure, as well as of the regulations we have mentioned. But, with all the policy that human foreſight might deviſe, ſuch extenſive dominions could only be governed and preſerved under wiſe and vigorous rulers; and ſuch, when we conſider the ordinary courſe of nature, and the uſual education of princes, could not be expected in any long ſucceſſion. Aurengzebe was a phenomenon that rarely appears in the ſphere of royalty: his mind was formed during his long ſtruggle for the empire, while he was obliged to command his paſſions, and ſtudy the ways and characters of mankind. "His ſceptre was too "ponderous to be wielded by the feeble "hands of his ſucceſſors;" and, in leſs than ſixty years from his death, his wonderful empire was reduced almoſt to nothing.

Nizam al Muluc, viceroy of the Deckan, who, without open rebellion, had in reality rendered himſelf independent, to avert the

ſtorm with which he was threatened from the miniſters of Mahomed Shaw, is ſuppoſed to have ſuggeſted to *Thamas* Kouli Kawn, who was then at Candahar, his celebrated invaſion of Hindoſtan.

Thamas, after a ſingle battle, entered the city of Delhy, and the vanquiſhed emperor laid his *regalia* at his feet. Having collected immenſe wealth, and reſerved to himſelf all the countries belonging to the Mogul empire that were on the other ſide of the Indus, he reinſtated Mahomed Shaw on the throne with much ſolemnity, and returned with his army into Perſia. It is ſaid that, before his departure, he informed the emperor, who the perſons were who had betrayed him, and gave him much wholeſome advice. But the fabric was now ſhaken to its foundation, the treaſury was empty, the troops were mutinous, the prince was weak, the miniſters were unfaithful, and the viceroys of the diſtant provinces, though they affected ſubmiſſion,

no longer reſpected commands which they knew could not be enforced, and in the end rendered their ſtations, that formerly were of ſhort duration, hereditary in their families. All that now belongs to Shaw Allum, the preſent nominal emperor of Hindoſtan, is the city of Delhy, and a ſmall diſtrict round it, where, even deprived of ſight by the barbarous hand of a rebel, he remains an empty ſhadow of royalty, an inſtance of the inſtability of human greatneſs, and of the precarious ſtate of deſpotic governments.

Throughout Hindoſtan there are many rajahs to be found, who ſtill enjoy the territories of their anceſtors. Some never were ſubdued, and owe their independence to the natural ſituation of their poſſeſſions, which renders invaſion difficult. Others were permitted, from policy or neceſſity, to retain them, on condition of paying a ſtipulated tribute.

The Hindoos are the only cultivators of the land, and the only manufacturers. The Mahomedans who came into India were soldiers, or followers of a camp, and even now are never to be found employed in the labours of husbandry or the loom.

SKETCH IV.

Government. Public Buildings. Forts, and Places of the Reſidence of Rajahs.

THE government throughout Hindoſtan ſeems to have been anciently, as it is now, feudal; and if we may judge from the apparently happy ſtate of thoſe countries where the deſtructive hand of the conqueror has not yet been felt, and from the inviolable attachment which the Hindoos bear to their princes, we muſt conclude, that, under their native ſovereigns, they were governed on principles of the moſt juſt and benevolent policy. In thoſe countries the lands were highly cultivated; the towns and their manufactures flouriſh; the villages were compoſed of neat and com-

commodious habitations, and filled with cheerful inhabitants; and wherever the eye turned, it beheld marks of the mild protection of the government, and of the eaſe and induſtry of the people. Such was Tanjore, and ſome other provinces, not many years ago.

Under the government of the Hindoo emperors, there were ſeveral kings or *great Rajahs*, who were immediately ſubordinate to the emperor; and other inferior Rajahs, or nobles, who paid tribute to their reſpective ſuperiors, and who, when ſummoned to the field, were obliged to attend them, with a certain number of men in arms, in proportion to the value of their poſſeſſions. Beſides the eſtates of the Rajahs, there were other hereditary lands belonging to perſons of leſs note, and ſome that were appropriated to charitable and religious purpoſes. We likewiſe find, that in many parts of Hindoſtan, certain lands or commons were attached to the different villages,

villages, which were cultivated by the joint labours of their inhabitants. The care of theſe lands was committed to the elders of the village, and their produce applied to aſſiſt ſuch of the community as ſtood in need of it, to defray the expence of feſtivals, and to pay dancers and players, who might occaſionally be employed for the amuſement of the villagers.

The Ryuts, or peaſants, were allowed a certain portion of the harveſt, by the lord or proprietor of the land, with which they maintained their families, provided and kept their cattle, and were furniſhed with ſeed for the ſucceeding ſeaſon. The portion given to the peaſant ſeems to have varied, and to have been chiefly determined by the fertility or barrenneſs of the ſoil, the eaſe or difficulty of cultivation, or the abundance or failure of the harveſt.

In countries that are plentifully ſupplied with water, the labour of the huſbandman is much diminiſhed, and his crops are generally

generally very abundant; but on the coaſt of Coromandel, where the ſoil is for the moſt part ſandy, and water ſcarce, greater exertion is required, which is often but ſcantily repaid.

In ſuch countries as have not the advantage of being watered by conſiderable rivers; or in ſuch parts where the water cannot be conveyed from them to the adjacent fields; tanks were made, which, being filled during the periodical rains, furniſhed water for the rice-fields, and for the cattle in the dry ſeaſon. Some of theſe reſervoirs are of great extent, and were made by incloſing deep and low ſituations with a ſtrong mound of earth*. Others of leſs magnitude, for the uſe of temples, towns, or gardens, are of a quadrangular form, lined with ſtone, deſcending in

* On the banks of the great tanks, are generally found a Choultry and a Temple.

regular

regular ſteps from the margin to the bottom *.

In the towns, as well as in moſt of the villages, are Choultries, or public buildings for the reception of travellers, which were erected and endowed by the munificence of the prince, the generoſity of ſome rich individual, or, not uncommonly, in conſequence of ſome pious vow.

A Brahman reſides near, who furniſhes the needy traveller with food, and a mat to lie upon; and contiguous to them is a tank or well, that thoſe who halt, may have it in their power to perform their ablutions before they eat or proceed on their journey.

The *Dewuls*, or temples, called by the Europeans *Pagodas*, are ſtill very nu-

* I have ſeen ſome of theſe meaſuring between 3 and 400 feet on the ſide. The Hindoos, from ſome ſuperſtitious notion, never conſtruct any thing of an exact ſquare, but rather oblong; though the difference is frequently ſo ſmall as ſcarcely to be perceptible to the eye.

merous, especially in the southern provinces, and some of them of such remote antiquity, that no account is left, either in writing or by tradition, when or by whom they were erected. But the northern provinces being first conquered, the seat of the Mahomedan government fixed, and its greatest force exerted in those parts, most of the temples were destroyed, the images of stone broken, and those of metal melted to cover the floors of the mosques and palaces, that the faithful Mussulman should have the satisfaction daily to trample on what had been held sacred by the Hindoo.

The temples at Hurdwar, where the Ganges enters Hindostan; at Matra, the supposed birth-place of Krishna; at Oudgein, at Benaras, and at Jaggernaut, on the coast of Orixa; a temple on the top of a mountain at Trippety, about 40 miles N. E. of Arcot; one on an island called Seringham, which is formed by the rivers

Cavery

Cavery and Coleroon, near Trichanapoly; and one on the iſland of Ramaſſeram, between Ceyloan and the continent, ſeem from the moſt diſtant times to have been conſtantly held in the higheſt veneration. There are alſo many others that are much reſorted to; but of all thoſe of which I have any knowledge, I believe that in Seringham * is the largeſt.

At

---

* About a mile from the weſtern extremity of the iſland of Seringham, and at a ſmall diſtance from the bank of the Coleroon, ſtands the celebrated pagoda. It is compoſed of ſeven ſquare incloſures, one within the other, and ſtanding at 350 feet parallel diſtance from each other. The walls are of ſtone and mortar, and twenty-five feet high: every incloſure has four large gateways, with a high tower over them, one being in the centre of each ſide, and oppoſite to the four cardinal points. The outward gateway to the ſouth is richly ornamented with pillars, ſome of which are ſingle ſtones 33 feet long, and 5 in diameter, and thoſe that form the roof of the gateway, which is flat, are ſtill larger. The pagoda is conſecrated to Viſhnou, and in the inner incloſure are the altars and the image of that deity. The Brahmans who belong to the pagoda are very numerous, and with their families are ſaid to amount to ſome thouſands of ſouls.

During

At the pagoda of Jaggarnaut, people of all caſts and ranks eat at the ſame board, without

---

During the ſtruggles between the Engliſh and French nations for ſuperiority in the Carnatic, and in ſupport of the Mahomedan viceroys, whoſe cauſe they reſpectively eſpouſed, the repoſe of the Brahmans was diſturbed, and their temple profaned; it was alternately taken poſſeſſion of by the French and Engliſh armies. When thoſe rude intruders firſt attempted to enter it, a Brahman who ſtood on the top of the outer gateway, after having in vain ſupplicated them to deſiſt, rather than be a witneſs of ſuch pollution, threw himſelf on the pavement below, and daſhed out his brains. As the firſt incloſure afforded room more than ſufficient for their reception, at the intreaties of the Brahmans they did not proceed any farther.

About half a mile eaſt from this pagoda is another called Jumbookiſhna. When the French, who, with their ally Chunda Saib, had been for ſome time ſhut up in thoſe two pagodas, ſurrendered them to Mr. Laurence in June 1752, a thouſand Rajahpout ſeapoys refuſed to march out of Seringham until aſſured that their conquerors would not paſs beyond the third incloſure, declaring they would die to a man in defending the paſſage to it: but Mr. Laurence, admiring their courage, and reſpecting their devotion, far from giving them offence, ordered that none ſhould go beyond the ſecond. ORME, &c.

Tavernier gives the following deſcription of a temple near Amidabad, which the Mahomedans had converted

without diſtinction or pre-eminence. This is peculiar to that place, being no where elſe allowed; and the permiſſion or rather order for the pilgrims of different caſts to eat together, is ſaid to be in commemoration of their hero and philoſopher Kriſhna*, who always recommended complacency and affection for each other. A great quantity of victuals is every day

verted into a moſque: "Il y avoit, en ce lieu là, une "pagode dont les Mahomedans ſe ſont mis en poſ- "ſeſſion pour en faire une moſque. Avant que d'y "entrer, on paſſe trois grandes cours, pavées de mar- "bre, et entourées de galleries, et il n'eſt pas permis "de mettre le pied dans la troiſieme ſans oter ſes "ſouliers. Le dedans de la moſque eſt ornée a la "moſaique, la plus grande partie etant d'agates de "diverſes couleurs, qu'on tire des montagnes de "Cambaya, qui ne ſont qu'à deux journées de là. "On y voit pluſieurs ſepultures des rois idolatres, "leſquelles ſont comme autant de petites chapelles "a la moſaique, avec de petites colonnes de marbre, "qui ſoutiennent une petite voute, dont le ſepulcre "eſt couvert."

Voyage de Tavernier, Tome III. Page 59, *Edition de Paris*, 1724.

* Kriſhna is repreſented in the *Mahabarat*, and other works, to be the god Viſhnou in one of his incarnations.

prepared, and, after being placed before the altars, is partaken of by the pilgrims. The Brahmans belonging to this pagoda pretend, that it was built by order of the emperor, at the beginning of the Kaly-Youg *, in honour of Viſhnou, by whom the houſe of Pandoo was peculiarly protected.

There is a pile of ruins on the coaſt of Coromandel near Sadras, called, by Europeans, from the number of its towers, *the ſeven pagodas*, by the natives Malavipatam. It appears that it was once a temple and palace of great extent. Moſt of the characters and hieroglyphics with which the walls abound, are no longer underſtood; and though tradition informs us that it was once at a conſiderable diſtance from the ſhore, when the tide is at flood, moſt of the ruins are now covered with the water †.

The

* See *Aſtronomy of the Hindoos*, page 224.

† There are here many pieces of ſculpture in very perfect preſervation, which, with many others ſcattered over

The temples at Salſette*, which are hewn out of the ſolid rock, and contain an incredible number of pillars, and figures in bas-relief, announce a work of ſuch aſtoniſhing labour, that the people are firmly perſuaded it could not be executed by men, but was performed by genii by order of the gods.

The Hindoo poets frequently mention *Duarka* as a place highly celebrated. It is ſaid to have ſtood at the extremity of the peninſula, and to have been ſwallowed up by the ſea, a few days after the death of Kriſhna.

At the hour of public worſhip, the people are admitted to a periſtile, or veſtibule, the roof of which in the large pagodas is ſupported by ſeveral rows of pillars; and while the Brahmans pray before the image, and perform their ceremonies, the dancing women dance in

---

over Hindoſtan, prove the great ſuperiority of the ancient Hindoos in this art, to their later deſcendants.

* Beſides the pagodas of Salſette, ſeveral of a ſimilar kind are found in different parts of Hindoſtan.

the court, or under the portico, ſinging the praiſes of the god to the ſound of various muſical inſtruments.

The inauguration of a temple is attended with great ceremony and proportional expence. After it is completely finiſhed, the Brahmans are perhaps obliged to wait ſeveral months, before they find, by their aſtrology, a fit day for that ſolemnity. The day is afterwards annually celebrated, and is called *the feaſt of the Dewul.* Every temple is dedicated to ſome particular deity, and each has its annual feaſt, beginning with the day on which the inauguration was performed; it laſts ten days; and to temples that are held in particular veneration, pilgrims reſort on that occaſion from almoſt every part of Hindoſtan. Few come without an offering, by which means alone, the revenue of ſome of the temples is rendered very conſiderable; but in the countries that are under the Mahomedan

medan yoke, the Brahmans, as well as the pilgrims, are uſually taxed by the government.

Throughout Hindoſtan we meet with many places of defence, which, from their conſtruction, as well as by tradition, appear alſo to be of great antiquity, and ſeem deſigned to reſiſt the force of time as well as of the enemy. Theſe alone are ſufficient to ſhew, that the humane laws of Brimha could not ſecure the mild Hindoos from being diſturbed by the fatal effects of ambition; and that the paſſions in every climate are too powerful to be reſtrained, even by the wiſeſt and moſt ſalutary regulations. The building of places of ſecurity we find commanded by the law itſelf; for in the code of Hindoo laws, in a recapitulation of the qualities and things neceſſary for a magiſtrate or ruler, it is ſaid, "He ſhall erect a "ſtrong fort in the place where he chuſes "to reſide, and ſhall build a wall on all

" the four ſides, with towers and battle-
" ments, and ſhall encloſe it with a
" ditch," &c.

Some of thoſe fortreſſes are by ſituation ſo ſtrong as to baffle all the efforts of art in a regular attack, and are only to be reduced by ſurpriſe or famine. Such is the fort now called Dowlatabad near Aurengabad, Golcondah near to Hydrobad, Gualior *, and many others. But

---

* Gualior, belonging to the Rajah of Ghod, was taken by ſurpriſe by the Engliſh in 1780 from the Mahrattas, who were then in poſſeſſion of it.

It ſtands on a rock, about four Engliſh miles in length, of unequal breadth, and nearly flat at the top. The ſides are almoſt perpendicular in every part; for where the rock is not ſo naturally, it has been made ſo by art. The height from the plain below is unequal, but generally from 200 to 300 feet. The rampart that goes round the top conforms to the edge of the precipice. The only aſcent is by ſtone ſteps, which are defended at the bottom by a wall and towers, and in the way up by ſeven ſtrong ſtone gate-ways, at certain diſtances from each other. On the top there are many noble buildings, reſervoirs for water, and even cultivated land. At the north-weſt foot of the mountain is a large and well-built town.

theſe

theſe ſeem only to have been intended by the natives as places of retreat in caſe of need, and for the ſecurity of their families and treaſures in times of danger; and not for their uſual reſidence, or the defence of the country.

In open and plain countries, the forts are conſtructed with high walls, flanked by round towers, and are incloſed by a wet or dry ditch *. The Rajah and his family dwell within the fort, nearly adjoining to which is the town, or pettah.

The place of reſidence of the Polygar Rajahs, or thoſe whoſe poſſeſſions are in woody and hilly countries, is frequently found ſurrounded with an impervious thicket, cloſely planted with bamboos and

* I have known inſtances of their having aligators bred in the ditches of their forts, which correſponds with what Pliny mentions. In ſpeaking of the different nations of India he ſays, *Horatæ urbe pulchrâ, foſſis paluſtribus munitâ; per quas crocodili, humani corporis avidiſſimi, aditum niſi ponte non dant.* PLIN. lib. vi. cap. 20.

other thorns. A road leads from the open country through the thicket to an area in the centre of it, ſometimes forming a plain of ſeveral miles in circumference, in the middle of which is the town. Should it be near to mountains, a road ſimilar to the other, communicates with them on the oppoſite ſide, the entrance to which is commonly defended by a fort, or a deep trench and breaſt-work. Theſe roads are narrow, prolonged by frequent windings, and interſected by barriers; and, when an attack is apprehended, they are rendered impaſſable by cutting ditches and felling trees. By ſuch frequent interruptions, the progreſs of troops towards the town is neceſſarily ſlow, during which they are liable to be conſtantly annoyed by thoſe who may be concealed in the thickets *.

Even

* The following is a deſcription of the attack of one of thoſe places, as extracted from a letter of Colonel Fullarton to Lord Macartney and the Council

Even the common roads through the *Pollams*, or poſſeſſions of theſe Rajahs, have generally impervious woods on each ſide,

---

Council at Madras, contained in his Account of military Operations in the ſouthern Parts of India, in the Campaigns of 1782, 1783, and 1784:

"On our arrival before the town of Shevigerry, "he (the Polygar chief) retired to the thickets, near "four miles deep, in front of his *Comby*, which they "cover and defend. He manned the whole extent of "a ſtrong embankment, that ſeparates the wood and "open country; was joined by other aſſociated Po- "lygars, and muſtered eight or nine thouſand men in "arms. Finding that they trifled with our propoſals, "the line was ordered under arms in the morning, "and orders were given for the attack. It com- "menced by the Europeans, and four battalions of "Seapoys, moving againſt the embankment which "covers the wood. The Polygars, in full force, op- "poſed us, but our troops remained with their fire- "locks ſhouldered, though under a heavy fire, until "they approached the embankment, where they gave "a general diſcharge and ruſhed upon the enemy. "By the vigour of this advance, we got poſſeſſion "of the ſummit, and the Polygars took poſt on the "verge of the adjoining wood, diſputing every ſtep "with great loſs on both ſides. As we found the "*Comby* could not be approached in front, we pro- "ceeded to cut a road through impenetrable thickets "for

ſide, and gateways or barriers acroſs, which, beſides ſerving as a defence, are intended for the purpoſe of levying a duty on merchandiſe.

" for three miles, to the baſe of the hill that bounds " the *Comby* on the weſt. We continued to cut our " way under an unabating fire from 8000 Polygars, " who conſtantly preſſed upon our advanced party, " ruſhed upon the line of attack, piked the bullocks " that were dragging the guns, and killed many of " our people. But theſe attempts were repulſed by " perſeverance, and before ſunſet we had opened a " paſſage entirely to the mountain, which is extremely " high, rocky, and in many places almoſt perpendicular. " Having reſolved to attack from this unexpected " quarter, the troops undertook the ſervice and at- " tained the ſummit. The Polygar parties poſted to " guard that eminence being routed, after much firing " we deſcended on the other ſide and flanked the " *Comby*. The enemy, ſeeing us maſters of the moun- " tain, retreated under cover of the night by paths " inacceſſible to regular troops, and we took poſſeſ- " ſion of this extraordinary receſs."

SKETCH V.

Caſts.

THE Hindoos are divided into four caſts * or tribes, the Brahman, the Khatry, the Bhyſe, and the Soodera. Theſe caſts are at preſent again divided into two parties, or ſects, though we muſt ſuppoſe them to have been originally united. The one is called the Viſhnou-Bukht, and the other the Sheevah-Bukht, or the followers of Viſhnou, and the followers of Sheevah. The former diſtinguiſh themſelves by painting the forehead

* Diodorus Siculus erroneouſly divides the Hindoos into ſeven caſts. Into this miſtake he may have been led by the Chandalas, and the diviſion of the Viſhnou and Sheevah-Bukht, or by taking ſome of the tribes for caſts.

with

with a horizontal line, and the latter with a perpendicular one *.

According to the Hindoo account of the creation, as contained in the ſacred books, the Veds †, and explained in different Saſtras,

---

* Beſides the four caſts above mentioned, there is an adventitious tribe, or race of people, called in the Sanſkreet, Chandalas; and on the coaſt of Coromandel, Pariars; who are employed in the meaneſt offices, and have no reſtrictions with regard to diet. Their number, compared with that of any other caſt, is inconſiderable, and ſeems evidently to conſiſt of thoſe perſons that have been expelled their caſts, which is a puniſhment inflicted for certain offences. Were a Hindoo of any of the other caſts to touch a Chandala, even by accident, he muſt waſh himſelf and change his raiment. He would refrain from the productions of the earth, if he knew that they had been cultivated by a Chandala. A Chandala cannot enter a temple, or be preſent at any religious ceremony. He has no rank in ſociety, and cannot ſerve in any public employment. Hence the puniſhment of expulſion, which is ſuppoſed in its conſequences to extend even to another life, becomes more terrible than that of death.

† The Veds, or, as pronounced in ſome parts of Hindoſtan, Beds, and on the coaſt of Coromandel Vedams, contain all the principles of their religion, laws,

Saſtras*, Brama, or God, having commanded the world *to be*, created Bawaney, who, dancing and ſinging the praiſes of the Supreme, dropped from her womb three eggs upon the ground, from which were produced three beings, Brimha, Viſhnou, and Sheevah. To the firſt Brama gave the power of creating the things of this world; to the ſecond, that of cheriſhing; and to the third, that of reſtraining and correcting them.

Brimha created the Brahman from his mouth: his rank was, therefore, the moſt eminent; and his buſineſs, to perform the

---

laws, and government, and are ſuppoſed to be of divine origin. The Tallingahs, and Malabars or Tamouls, generally change the B into V, and terminate the Sanſkreet words with an M.

* Some of the Saſtras are commentaries on the Veds, and have been written by different ancient Pundits. The Neetee Saſtra is a ſyſtem of ethics. The Dharma Saſtra treats of religious duties, &c.

Pooran, which we often find mentioned, literally ſignifying *ancient*, is a title given to a variety of works which treat of their gods and heroes.

rites of religion, and to inſtruct mankind in their duty.

He created the Khatry from his arms; and his duty was to defend the people, to govern, and to command.

He next created the Bhyſe from his thighs and belly; and his buſineſs was to provide and to ſupply by agriculture and traffic.

The Soodera he created from his feet; and to him devolved the duty to labour, to ſerve, and to obey.

He then proceeded to create all other animate and inanimate things; and the Supreme Being infuſed into mankind the principles of piety, of juſtice, of compaſſion, and of love; of luſt, of avarice, of pride, and of anger; with underſtanding and reaſon, to preſide over and apply them.

Brimha having reflected within himſelf, and being inſpired by the *principle of wiſdom*, wrote rules for the promotion of virtue,

virtue, the reſtraining of vice; fixed the duties of the Brahman, the Khatry, the Bhyſe, and the Soodera; and calling theſe writings *Veds*, he delivered them to the Brahman, with power to read and to explain them *.

The Brahmans ſhed no blood, and eat no fleſh †; their diet is rice and other ve-

---

* "The natural duty of the Brahman is peace, ſelf-
"reſtraint, patience, rectitude, wiſdom, and learning."
"The natural duties of the Khatry are bravery,
"glory, not to flee from the field, rectitude, gene-
"roſity, and princely conduct."
"The natural duty of the Bhyſe is to cultivate
"the land, to tend the cattle, to buy and ſell."
"The natural duty of the Soodera is ſervitude."
"A man being contented with his own particular
"lot and ſituation obtaineth perfection."
"A man by following the duties which are ap-
"pointed by his birth, doeth no wrong."
"A man's own calling ought not to be forſaken."
Bhagvat Geeta.

The Brahmans only may read the Veds; the Khatries may hear them read; but the other caſts may only hear the Saſtras, or Commentaries on the Veds.

† Porphyry and Clement of Alexandria, ſpeaking of the ancient Brahmans, ſay, they drank no wine, nor eat any animal food.

getables,

getables, prepared with a kind of butter called ghee *, and with ginger and other ſpices; but they conſider milk as the pureſt food, as coming from the cow, an animal for whoſe ſpecies they have a ſacred veneration †.

All the Brahmans are not prieſts, yet all prieſts are Brahmans. Thoſe who are not of the order of the prieſts are employed as ſecretaries and accountants in various civil departments; and there are inſtances

---

* *Ghee* is butter melted and refined, which, thus prepared, may be kept a conſiderable time.

† This veneration for the ox may have been ordained to preſerve an animal from ſlaughter that is of ſo great utility to mankind, particularly in Hindoſtan, which is productive but of few horſes comparatively with the number of its inhabitants. The reſpect which the Egyptians entertained for the ſame animal, may have been borrowed from the Hindoos, or have ariſen from the ſame cauſe, which perhaps alſo gave birth to the bull of Zoroaſter. In the code of Gentoo laws, we find, "that if any one ſhall exact "labour from a bullock that is hungry or thirſty, or "oblige him to labour when fatigued, or out of ſea-"ſon, the magiſtrate ſhall fine him."

of

of Brahmans being firſt miniſters, not only to Hindoo princes, but even to Mahomedans, being preferred on account of their knowledge, ſobriety of manners, and conſtant application. None of theſe, however, can be admitted into the prieſthood, and in their appearance they are only diſtinguiſhed from the other Hindoos by the mark on their forehead. They likewiſe abſtain from eating any thing that has had life in it; and they meet with attention from the members of the other caſts, though not in ſo great a degree as the prieſts. But thoſe who are of the prieſthood confine their attention to the performance of religious ceremonies, to the ſervice of the temples, to ſtudy, and to the education of youth.

Throughout the Hindoo laws, which were moſt probably compoſed by the Brahmans, reigns an uncommon degree of partiality to their caſt. They claim a pre-eminence in rank, even to their

princes, or rajahs, who are of the ſecond, or Khatry caſt. A rajah will receive, and taſte with reſpect, the food prepared by a Brahman, but a Brahman dare not eat of any thing that may have been touched by one of another caſt. In the adminiſtration of juſtice, the puniſhment of a Brahman for any crime is milder, and in general of a leſs diſgraceful nature, than that of another man, for the ſame offence; and they have deſcended to the moſt minute circumſtances, in order to preſerve that deference and reſpect which they have eſtabliſhed as their due.

It is ſaid, in their laws, "If a Brahman "commit a crime deſerving of a capital "puniſhment, the magiſtrate ſhall, to "prevent his committing a ſimilar crime "in future, ſentence him to perpetual im-"priſonment. There is no crime in the "world ſo great as that of murdering a "Brahman; and therefore no magiſtrate

"ſhall

" ſhall ever deſire the death of a Brahman,
" or cut off one of his limbs.

" Whatever orders ſuch Brahmans as
" are Pundits ſhall deliver to the Ryots
" from the Saſtra, the Ryots ſhall ac-
" knowledge and obey.

" If a Soodera give much, and fre-
" quent, moleſtation to a Brahman, the ma-
" giſtrate ſhall inſtantly put him to death.

" If a Brahman go to wait on a
" prince, the ſervants and *derbans* ſhall
" not obſtruct his entrance, but give him
" a ready admiſſion.

" If a Brahman be paſſenger in a boat,
" he ſhall not pay any thing to the water-
" man; and he ſhall enter and leave the
" boat before any other of the paſſen-
" gers," &c. In ſettling precedence, and making way on the road, all are obliged to yield to the Brahmans *.

The

* Diodorus Siculus, in ſpeaking of the caſts among the Hindoos, ſays, " Primum eſt philoſopho-

The functions of royalty devolve without exception on the Khatry caſt; and the poſſeſſions and authority of their rajahs are hereditary, deſcending in the line of legitimate male primogeniture. But as the right of blood deſcends only to *this* degree, in default thereof the prince may adopt any one of his kinſmen to be his ſucceſſor *, who, from the time of his adoption, obtains the rights and the appellation of his ſon.

The younger branches of the families of rajahs generally ſerve in a military capacity, and have ſometimes lands given them which they hold by a feudal tenure.

All commercial tranſactions are committed to the Bhyſe, or Bannian.

" rum qui ceteris, numero pauciores, ſupereminent " dignitate. Hi ab omni opere immunes, neque " ſerviunt cuiquam neque imperant."

Diod. Siculus, Lib. II. *cap.* x.

* Inſtances of this kind frequently occur. Vizi-aram-rauze, the preſent rajah of Vizianagaram, was adopted in preference to his elder brother Sitta-ram-rauze.

The

The Soodera caſt is by far more numerous than all the other caſts together, and compriſes the artiſan, and the labourer of every kind. The mechanics and artiſans are again divided into as many claſſes as there are profeſſions; for the children are univerſally brought up to follow the buſineſs or profeſſion of the father.

No one of any caſt can quit it, or be admitted into another: a preciſion which precludes error, preſcribes to all their reſpective duties, and prevents them from infringing on the cuſtoms or privileges of each other.

Though the other caſts have greater liberty with reſpect to diet than the Brahmans, yet they ſcrupulouſly refrain from what is forbidden them, and will not partake of what may have been provided by any of an inferior caſt, or different religion*.

They

* Were a Hindoo to break thoſe rules, he would forfeit or loſe his caſt. It having been found requiſite

They may eat fiſh and fleſh, but not of all kinds indifferently; and to abſtain from them is conſidered a virtue, as may be obſerved in the following paſſage of the Heetopades †:

"Thoſe

---

to ſend ſome regiments of Seapoys from one Engliſh ſettlement to another by ſea, thoſe who were Hindoos were permitted to provide and carry with them water and proviſions for their own particular uſe. One of the ſhips happening to be longer in the paſſage than the Hindoos had expected, nothing remained to them, for ſeveral days before their arrival at land, but a very ſmall quantity of dry rice to each daily, without water to dreſs it, and ſcarcely more than ſufficient to wet their mouths; yet they could not be prevailed on to taſte the other water or proviſions that were on board, though almoſt expiring from thirſt and want of nouriſhment.

† The Heetopades, Heetopadeſa, or Apologues of Viſhnou-Sarma, an ancient Brahman, was tranſlated from the Sanſkrit by Mr. Charles Wilkins, and publiſhed in 1787. Mr. Wilkins ſays, that the meaning of the word is, *uſeful inſtruction*. Sir William Jones acquaints us, in a diſcourſe to the ſociety of Calcutta, "That the fables of Viſhnou-Sarma, improperly called "the fables of Pilpay, are the moſt beautiful and an-"cient collection of apologues in the world, and are "now extant under different names in various lan-"guages.

" Thoſe who have forſaken the killing
" of all; thoſe whoſe houſes are a ſanc-
" tuary to all; they are in the way to
" heaven."

" There is one friend, Religion, who
" attendeth even in death, though all
" other things go to decay with the body."

No Hindoo of any caſt is allowed, by his religion, to taſte any intoxicating liquor; it is only drank by the Chandalahs, or outcaſts; and the wine or liquor mentioned by Quintus Curtius we are at a loſs to account for, unleſs it were the toddy, or juice of the cocoa-nut and palmyra tree, which, before it be fermented, is of a cool-

---

" guages. That they appear to have been firſt tranſ-
" lated from the Sanſkrit in the ſixth century, by
" Buzerchumihr, chief phyſician, and afterwards vizeer,
" to the great Anuſhirwan, king of Perſia." Mr. Wilkins obſerves, that the Perſian verſion of Abul Mala Näſſer Alla Muſtofi, made in the 515th year of the Hegira, was tranſlated into French with the title of *Les conſeils et les maximes de Pilpa, Philoſophe Indien, ſur les divers etats de la vie*; and that this reſembles the original more than any other tranſlation he has ſeen.

ing purgative quality, and drank on that account *.

That the Hindoos retain their original character and manners, notwithſtanding the conqueſt of their country by ſtrangers, is owing to the ſtrict obſervance of their rules and cuſtoms, from which no hope of advantage or fear of puniſhment can poſſibly engage them to depart.

---

* From the toddy, when fermented, an unwholeſome ſpirit is made, which is drank by the Chandalahs or Parriars, and the lower claſſes of Mahomedans and Europeans. As it may every where be had, and at a low price, it is difficult to prevent the ſoldiers from uſing it to exceſs, which greatly contributes to the ruin of their healths and conſtitutions.

SKETCH VI.

Devotees.

IN every part of Hindoſtan we meet with numbers of devotees, diſtinguiſhed by various names, but not reſtricted to any caſt. They become ſuch from choice, and every Hindoo, except the Chandalah, is at liberty to adopt this mode of life.

Of all the numerous claſſes of devotees, none are ſo much reſpected as the Saniaſſies and Yogeys. They quit their relations, and every concern of this life, and wander about the country without any fixed abode.

It is ſaid, in their ſacred writings, "That "a Saniaſſy, or he who ſhall devote him-"ſelf to a ſolitary religious life, ſhall have "no

" no other clothing, but what may be ne-
" ceſſary to cover his nakedneſs, nor any
" other worldly goods but a ſtaff in his
" hand, and a pitcher to drink out of.
" That he ſhall always meditate on the
" truths contained in the ſacred writings,
" but never argue on them. That his food
" ſhall be confined to rice and other
" vegetables; that he ſhall eat but once
" a-day, and then ſparingly. That he
" ſhall look forward with deſire to the
" ſeparation of the ſoul from the body,
" and be indifferent about heat, or cold,
" or hunger, or praiſe, or reproach, or
" any thing concerning this life; and
" that, unleſs he ſtrictly follow theſe rules,
" and ſubdue his paſſions, he will only be
" more criminal, by embracing a ſtate, the
" duties of which he could not perform,
" neglecting thoſe he was born to preſerve."

The preciſe diſtinction between the Yogey and the Saniaſſy is not known. The former

former in Sanſkrit, ſignifies a devout perſon; the latter, one who had entirely forſaken this world. It is ſaid in the dialogues between Kriſhna and Arjoon, in the Mahabarat,

"Learn, ſon of Pandoo, that what they "call *Sānias*, or a forſaking of the world, "is the ſame with *Yōg*, or the practice of "devotion."

"The man who is happy in his heart, "at reſt in his mind, and enlightened with-"in, is a *Yogey*, or one devoted to God, "of a godly ſpirit, and obtaineth the im-"material nature of *Brahm* the Supreme."

"The man who keepeth the outward "accidents from entering the mind, and "his eyes fixed in contemplation between "his brows; who maketh the breath paſs "equally through his noſtrils, who hath "ſet his heart upon ſalvation, and who is "free from luſt, fear, or anger, is for ever "bleſſed in this life."

" He cannot be a *Yogey* who in his ac-
" tions hath not abandoned all views."

" The Yogey conſtantly exerciſeth the
" ſpirit in private. He is of a ſubdued
" mind, free from hope. He planteth his
" ſeat firmly on a ſpot that is neither too
" high nor too low, and ſitteth on the
" ſacred graſs that is called Koos, covered
" with a ſkin, or cloth.—There he, whoſe
" buſineſs is the reſtraining of his paſſions,
" ſhould ſit, in the exerciſe of devotion,
" for the purification of his ſoul, keeping
" his head, his neck, and his body ſteady,
" without motion, his eyes fixed on the
" point of his noſe, looking at nothing elſe
" around. The Yogey of a ſubdued mind,
" thus employed, in the exerciſe of devo-
" tion, is as a lamp ſtanding in a place
" without wind, which waveth not."

" Supreme happineſs attendeth him
" whoſe mind is thus at peace, whoſe car-
" nal affections and paſſions are ſubdued,
" and who is in God and free from ſin."

" The

" The man whoſe mind is endued with " devotion, beholdeth the ſupreme ſoul " in all things, and all things in the ſu- " preme ſoul."

" The *Yogey* who believeth in unity, " and worſhipeth me preſent in all things, " dwelleth in me."

" This divine diſcipline which is called " *Yog*, is hard to be attained by him who " hath not his ſoul in ſubjection, but it " may be acquired by him who taketh " pains."

" The *Yogey* is more exalted than the " *Japaſivees*, thoſe zealots who haraſs " themſelves in performing penances."

" He is both a *Yogey* and a *Saniaſy* " who doeth that which he hath to do in- " dependent of the fruit thereof."

" Works are ſaid to be the means by " which a man may acquire devotion, ſo " reſt is called the means for him who " hath attained devotion."

" When

" When the all-contemplative *Saniaſy* is " not engaged with objects of the ſenſes, " nor in works, then he is called one who " hath attained devotion."

" The ſoul of the conquered placid " ſpirit, is the ſame in heat and in cold, in " pain and in pleaſure, in honour and diſ- " grace."

" The man whoſe mind is replete with " divine wiſdom and learning, who ſtand- " eth on the pinnacle, and hath ſubdued " his paſſions, is ſaid to be devout *."

It is not improbable that ſome of the paſſages in the ſacred writings which were enigmatical, being underſtood literally by the ignorant, have given riſe to thoſe extravagant penances, with which ſome of the devotees torture themſelves. In one of the above quotations they ſeem even to

* Bhagvat Geeta. The above quotations, as well as others, are not taken in the exact order in which they follow in the work, but are ſelected from different parts, as they ſuited the ſubject treated of.

be

be condemned; the Yogey being ſaid to be more exalted than the Tapaſivee, &c. I ſaw one of the latter, who having made a vow to keep his arms conſtantly extended over his head, with his hands claſped together, they were become withered and immoveable. Not long ago, one of them finiſhed meaſuring the diſtance between Benares and Jaggernaut with his body, by alternately ſtretching himſelf upon the ground and riſing; which, if he performed it as faithfully as he pretended, muſt have taken ſome years to accompliſh. Some make vows to keep their arms croſſed over their breaſts for the reſt of their days, others to keep their hands for ever ſhut, and their nails are ſometimes ſeen growing through the back of their hand; ſome are chained to a particular ſpot, and others never lie down, but ſleep leaning againſt a tree *.

There

* *Philoſophos eorum quos Gymnoſophiſtas vocant, ab exortu ad occaſum perſtare contuentes ſolem immobilibus oculis,*

There are frequent inſtances of devotees and penitents throwing themſelves under the wheels of the chariots * of Sheevah or Viſhnou, when the idol is drawn out to celebrate the feaſt of a temple, and being thereby cruſhed to death: and not long ſince we ſaw an account of the aged father of a numerous offspring, who devoted himſelf to the flames to appeaſe the wrath of a divinity, who, as he imagined, had for ſome time paſt afflicted his family and neighbours with a mortal epidemical diſeaſe.

The Pandarams on the coaſt of Coromandel are followers of Sheevah; they rub their faces and bodies with the aſhes of burnt cow-dung, and go about the towns and villages ſinging the praiſes of their God.

---

oculis, ferventibus arenis toto die alternis pedibus inſiſtere. Plin. lib. vii. cap. 2.

* Theſe chariots are more properly great moveable towers, which require ſome hundreds of men to draw them.

The

The Cary-patry-pandarams, are a ſet of religious perſons, who make a vow never to ſpeak; they go to the doors of houſes and demand charity by ſtriking their hands together. They take nothing but rice, which is given them ready prepared, and, if it be ſufficient to ſatisfy their hunger, they paſs the reſt of the day ſitting in the ſhade, and ſcarcely looking at any object that may come before them.

The Tadinums go about begging, and ſinging the hiſtory of the different incarnations of Viſhnou. They beat a kind of tabor; and have hollow braſs rings round their ankles, which, being filled with ſmall pebbles, make a conſiderable noiſe as they walk along.

The ancients knew that there were different claſſes of devotees amongſt the Hindoos; Strabo ſpeaks of three, one that lived in the foreſts and among the mountains, one that went naked, and a third, leſs rigid, who frequented the towns and

villages; but he, as well as others, frequently confound them with the Brahmans. Thoſe who came to the camp of Alexander were evidently not Brahmans, but ſome of theſe devotees. Calanus, who burnt himſelf in the preſence of Alexander and his officers, is ſaid to have gone naked; but the Brahmans neither go naked, nor commit any of thoſe acts of extravagance. Their lives are uniformly and indolently decent, and they give themſelves up more or leſs to ſtudy, according to their genius or character.

SKETCH VII.

Religion of the Hindoos.

WHATEVER opinion may be formed of the Hindoo religion itſelf, we cannot deny its profeſſors the merit of having adhered to it with a conſtancy unequalled in the hiſtory of any other. The number of thoſe who have been induced or compelled to quit their doctrines, notwithſtanding the long period of their ſubjection, and the perſecutions they have undergone, is too inconſiderable to bear any proportion to the number of thoſe who have adhered to them.

It is a circumſtance very ſingular, and merits particular attention, that, contrary to the practice of every other religious

ſociety, the Hindoos, far from diſturbing thoſe who are of a different faith, by endeavours to convert them, cannot even admit any proſelytes; and that, notwithſtanding the excluſion of others, and though tenacious of their own doctrines, they neither hate nor deſpiſe, nor pity, ſuch as are of a different belief, nor do they think them leſs favoured by the Supreme Being than themſelves. They ſay, that if the Author of the univerſe preferred one religion to another, *that only* could prevail which he approved; becauſe to ſuppoſe ſuch preference, while we ſee ſo many different religions, would be the height of impiety, as it would be ſuppoſing injuſtice towards thoſe that he left ignorant of his will; and they therefore conclude, that every religion is peculiarly adapted to the country and people where it is practiſed, and that all, in their original purity, are equally acceptable to God.

In

The Brahmans *, who tranſlated from the Sanſkrit language the laws and cuſtoms of the Hindoos, ſay in the preliminary diſcourſe prefixed to their work;

"From men of enlightened underſtandings and ſound judgment, who, in their reſearches after truth, have ſwept away from their hearts malice and oppoſition, it is not concealed that the diverſities of belief, which are cauſes of enmity and envy to the ignorant, are in fact a demonſtration of the power of the Supreme Being."

"The truly intelligent well know, that the difference and variety of created things, and the contrarieties of conſtitutions, are types of *his* wonderful attributes, whoſe complete power formed all things in the animal, vegetable, and material world, whoſe benevolence ſelected man to have dominion and authority over

* See Sketch II. p. 66.

" the reſt; who, having beſtowed on him " judgment and underſtanding, gave him " ſupremacy over the corners of the world; " who, having put into his hands the con- " trol and diſpoſal of all things, appointed " to each tribe its own religion; and who " inſtituted a variety of caſts, and a mul- " tiplicity of different cuſtoms, but views " with pleaſure in every place the mode of " worſhip particularly appointed to it; he " is with the attendants upon the moſque, " in counting the ſacred beads; and he is " in the temple with the Hindoos, at the " adoration of the idols."

However the intention of thoſe idols may have been corrupted in a long courſe of practice by the ignorant multitude of artful prieſts, they, as well as their various deities, ſeem evidently to have been only deſigned to ſhew the attributes of a Being of whom we cannot form any preciſe or ſimple idea, and who cannot be repreſented under any particular ſhape; neither have they any

image

image of Brama *, or God, who they ſometimes call the *Principle of Truth*, the *Spirit of Wiſdom*, the *Supreme Being*, and epithets of the ſame kind, expreſſive of his goodneſs and power. They ſay, "that "the mind may form ſome conception of "his attributes, when brought ſeparately "before it; but who can graſp the whole "within the limited circle of human "ideas?"

Bernier, who was an attentive traveller, a faithful narrator, and who, if we make allowances for the prejudices of the age in which he lived, may be conſidered as a judicious obſerver, gives the following account of a converſation he had with ſome of the principal pundits at Benares, upon the ſubject of the worſhip of idols amongſt the Hindoos.

"Lorſque je deſcendis le long du Gange, "et que je paſſai par Benares, j'allai trouver

* See Sketch V. p. 109.

" le chef de Pundets qui fait là ſa demeure
" ordinaire. C'eſt un religieux tellement
" renommé pour ſon ſavoir, que Chah
" Jehan *, tant pour ſa ſcience que pour
" complaire aux Rajas, lui fit penſion de
" deux mille roupies. C'etoit un gros
" homme, très bien fait, et qu'on re-
" gardoit avec plaiſir: pour tout vêtement
" il n'avoit qu'une eſpece d'écharpe
" blanche de ſoye, qui étoit liée à l'entour
" de ſa ceinture, et qui pendoit juſqu'à
" mi-jambe, avec un autre écharpe rouge,
" de ſoye, aſſez large, qu'il avoit ſur ſes
" épaules comme un petit manteau. Je
" l'avois vu pluſieurs fois à Delhi dans
" cette poſture, devant le Roi, dans l'Aſ-
" ſemblée de tous les Omrahs, et marcher
" par les rues tantot à pied tantot en Palcky.
" Je l'avois auſſi vu, et j'avois converſé
" pluſieurs fois avec lui, parceque pen-
" dant un an il s'etoit toujours trouvé à

* The father of Aurengzebe: his name is generally written by the Engliſh, Shaw Jehan.

" notre

" notre conference devant mon Agah, à " qui il faiſoit la cour, a fin qu'il lui fit " redonner ſa penſion, qu' Aurengzebe, " parvenu à l'Empire, lui avoit otée, pour " paroitre grand Muſulman. Dans la " viſite que je lui rendis a Benares, il me " fit cent careſſes, et me donna même la " collation dans la Bibliotheque de ſon " Univerſité avec le ſix plus fameux Pun- " dets de la ville. Quand je me vis en ſi " bonne compagnie, je les priai tous, de " me dire leur ſentiment ſur l'adoration de " leurs Idoles; car je leur diſois que je " m'en allois des Indes extrémement ſcan- " daliſé de ce coté là, et leur reprochois " que c'étoit une choſe contre toute ſorte " de raiſon et tout à fait indigne de gens " ſavans et Philoſophes comme eux:"

" Nous avons veritablement, me dirent " ils, dans nos temples, quantité de ſta- " tues diverſes, comme celle de Brahma*,

* This is probably a miſtake of Bernier, as the Hindocs have no ſtatue of *Brama*, who is God, the Supreme Being.

" Mahadeu,

" Mahadeu, Genich, et Gavani *, qui
" ſont des principaux et des plus parfaits
" Deutas, et meme de quantité d'autres
" de moindre perfection, auxquelles nous
" rendons beaucoup d'honneur, nous nous
" proſternons devant elles, et leur preſen-
" tons des fleurs, du ris, des huiles, de
" ſenteurs, du ſafran et autres choſes ſem-
" blables avec beaucoup de ceremonie:
" neantmoins, nous ne croyons point que
" ce ſtatues ſoient ou Brahma même, ou
" Béchen † lui même, et ainſi des autres,
" mais ſeulement leurs images et repreſen-
" tations, et nous ne leur rendons ces hon-
" neurs qu'à cauſe de ce qu'elles repre-
" ſentent; elles ſont dans nos Deuras §,
" a fin qu' il y ait quelque choſe devant les
" yeux qui arrête l'eſprit; et quand nous
" prions, ce n'eſt pas la ſtatue que nous
" prions, mais celui qui eſt repreſenté par
" la ſtatue: au reſte nous reconnoiſſons que

* Probably, Bawany. † Viſhen, or Viſhnou.
§ Dewuls, or temples.

" c'eſt

" c'eſt Dieu qui eſt le maitre abſolu et le " ſeul Tout-puiſſant."

The vulgar, whoſe underſtandings are only exerciſed by the uſual occupations and occurrences in their particular ſphere of life, and the feeble or ignorant amongſt the higher ranks of mankind, inſtead of going into ſpeculative reflections, naturally fix their attention on the external object that is preſented to them, which, aided with a little art, gradually leads them into a ſuperſtitious veneration of things, to which an inquiring and thinking mind eaſily underſtands that none is due. Nor need we go to Hindoſtan for inſtances of the truth of this aſſertion.

If we, therefore, abſtract our minds from the abuſes, and inquire into the ſpirit, of the Hindoo religion, we ſhall find that it inculcates the belief in one God only, without beginning and without end; nor can any thing be more ſublime than their idea of the Supreme Being. As a proof of this,

I ſhall

I ſhall quote ſome ſtanzas from the hymn to Narrayna, or the Spirit of God, taken, as Sir William Jones informs us, from the writings of their ancient authors.

Spirit of Spirits, who, through ev'ry part
Of ſpace expanded, and of endleſs time,
Beyond the reach of lab'ring thought ſublime,
Badſt uproar into beauteous order ſtart;
Before heav'n was, thou art.

Ere ſpheres beneath us roll'd, or ſpheres above,
Ere earth in firmamental æther hung,
Thou ſat'ſt alone, till, through thy myſtic love,
Things unexiſting to exiſtence ſprung,
And grateful deſcant ſung.

Omniſcient Spirit, whoſe all-ruling pow'r
Bids from each ſenſe bright emanations beam;
Glows in the rainbow, ſparkles in the ſtream,
Smiles in the bud, and gliſtens in the flow'r
That crowns each vernal bow'r;

Sighs in the gale, and warbles in the throat
Of every bird that hails the bloomy ſpring,
Or tells his love in many a liquid note,
Whilſt envious artiſts touch the rival ſtring,
Till rocks and foreſts ring;

Breathes in rich fragrance from the Sandal grove,
Or where the precious muſk-deer playful rove;

In

In dulcet juice, from cluſt'ring fruit diſtils,
And burns ſalubrious in the taſteful clove;
Soft banks and verd'rous hills
Thy preſent influence fills;
In air, in floods, in caverns, woods, and plains,
Thy will inſpirits all, thy ſovereign Maya reigns.

Blue cryſtal vault, and elemental fires,
That in th' æthereal fluid blaze and breathe;
Thou, toſſing main, whoſe ſnaky branches wreathe
This penſile orb with intertwiſting gyres;
Mountains, whoſe lofty ſpires,
Preſumptuous, rear their ſummits to the ſkies,
And blend their em'rald hue with ſapphire light;
Smooth meads and lawns, that glow with varying dyes
Of dew-beſpangled leaves and bloſſoms bright,
Hence! vaniſh from my ſight
Deluſive pictures! unſubſtantial ſhows!
My ſoul abſorb'd one only Being knows,
Of all perceptions one abundant ſource,
Whence ev'ry object, ev'ry moment flows:
Suns hence derive their force,
Hence planets learn their courſe;
But ſuns and fading worlds I view no more;
God only I perceive; God only I adore.

Brimha, Viſhnou, and Sheevah, are undoubtedly only emblems of the power, the goodneſs, and juſtice of the Supreme Being,

Being, and are ſometimes called the three united in one.

In the dialogues between Kriſhna and Arjoon, Kriſhna ſays: "I am the creator "of all things, and all things proceed "from me. Thoſe who are endued with "ſpiritual wiſdom know this, and worſhip "me."

"I am the ſoul, which is in the bodies "of all things. I am the beginning and "the end. I am time; I am all-graſping "death; and I am the reſurrection. I "am the ſeed of all things in nature, "and there is not any thing animate or "inanimate without me.

"I am the myſtic figure Oom*, the "Reek, the Sam, and the Yayoor Veds.

---

* Oom is ſaid to be a myſtic word, or emblem, to ſignify the Deity, and to be compoſed of Sanſkrit roots, or letters; the firſt of which ſtands for Creator; the ſecond, Preſerver; and the third, Deſtroyer. It is forbidden to be pronounced, except with extreme reverence. WILKINS.

"I am

" I am the witneſs, the comforter, the " aſylum, the friend. I am generation, " and diſſolution: in me all things are re- " poſited.

" The whole univerſe was ſpread abroad " by me.

" The fooliſh are unacquainted with my " ſupreme and divine nature. They are " of vain hope, of vain endeavours, and " void of reaſon; whilſt thoſe of true " wiſdom ſerve me in their hearts, undi- " verted by other gods.

" Thoſe who worſhip other gods, wor- " ſhip me. I am in the ſacrifice, in the " ſpices, in the invocation, in the fire, and " in the victim."

Arjoon ſays in reply: " Thou art the " prime Creator—Eternal God! Thou art " the Supreme! By thee the univerſe was " ſpread abroad! Thou art Vayoo, the " god of the winds; Agnee, the god of " fire; Varoon, the god of the oceans, " &c.

" Reverence

" Reverence be unto thee; again and " again reverence, O thou, who art all in " all! Great is thy power, and great thy " glory! Thou art the father of all things; " wherefore I bow down, and with my " body proſtrate on the ground, crave thy " mercy. Lord, worthy to be adored! " bear with me as a father with a ſon; a " friend with a friend; a lover with the " beloved."

In ſpeaking of ſerving the Deity, Kriſhna ſays:

" They who delighting in the welfare " of all nature, ſerve me in my incor- " ruptible, ineffable, and inviſible form; " omnipotent, incomprehenſible, ſtanding " on high, fixed, and immoveable, with " ſubdued paſſions, and who are the ſame " in all things, ſhall come unto me.

" Thoſe whoſe minds are attached to " my inviſible nature, have the greater " labour, becauſe an inviſible path is dif- " ficult to corporeal beings. Place thy

" heart

" heart on me, and penetrate me with thy " underſtanding, and thou ſhalt hereafter " enter unto me. But if thou ſhouldſt " be unable at once ſtedfaſtly to fix thy " mind on me, endeavour to find me by " means of conſtant practice.

" He, my ſervant, is dear to me, who " is free from enmity; merciful, and ex- " empt from pride and ſelfiſhneſs; who " is the ſame in pain and in pleaſure; " patient of wrongs; contented; and " whoſe mind is fixed on me alone.

" He is my beloved, of whom man- " kind is not afraid, and who is not afraid " of mankind; who is unſolicitous about " events; to whom praiſe and blame are " as one; who is of little ſpeech; who is " pleaſed with whatever cometh to paſs; " who has no particular home, and is of " a ſteady mind."

In treating of good works, he ſays:

" Both the deſertion and practice of " works, are the means of happineſs.

" But of the two, the practice is to be " diſtinguiſhed above the deſertion.

" The man, who, performing the duties " of life, and quitting all intereſt in them, " placeth them upon Brahm, the ſupreme, " is not tainted with ſin, but remaineth like " the leaf of the lotus unaffected by the " waters.

" Let not the motive be in the event: " be not one of thoſe, whoſe motive for " action is in the hope of reward.

" Let not thy life be ſpent in inaction: " perform thy duty, and abandon all " thoughts of the conſequence. The " miſerable and unhappy are ſo about the " event of things; but men, who are " endued with true wiſdom, are unmind- " ful of them."

Notwithſtanding that the Hindoos are ſeparated into the Viſhnou Bukht and Sheevah Bukht, and that a variety of ſects are to be found over the whole peninſula, the chief articles of their religion

" are

are uniform. All believe in Brama, or the Supreme Being; in the immortality of the ſoul; in a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments; in the doctrine of the metempſychoſis; and all acknowledge the Veds as containing the principles of their laws and religion. Nor ought we to wonder at the ſchiſms that have ariſen in ſuch a vaſt ſpace of time, but rather be ſurpriſed, that they have been ſo mild in their conſequences; eſpecially when we reflect on the numbers that aroſe amongſt ourſelves, and the dreadful effects they produced in a period ſo much ſhorter.

Their rules of morality are moſt benevolent; and hoſpitality and charity are not only ſtrongly inculcated, but I believe no where more univerſally practiſed than amongſt the Hindoos.

"Hoſpitality is commanded to be exer-
"ciſed even towards an enemy, when he
"cometh into thine houſe: the tree doth

" not withdraw its ſhade even from the
" wood-cutter.

" Good men extend their charity unto
" the vileſt animals. The moon doth not
" withhold her light even from the cot-
" tage of the Chandala *.

" Is this one of us, or is he a ſtranger?
" —Such is the reaſoning of the ungene-
" rous: but to thoſe, by whom liberality
" is practiſed, the whole world is but as
" one family."

---

* Outcaſt.

SKETCH VIII.

Mythology of the Hindoos.

NOtwithſtanding what has been ſaid in the foregoing Sketch, it muſt be owned, that the people in general believe in the exiſtence of inferior deities, which, like the divinities of the Greeks and Romans, are repreſented under different forms, and with ſymbols expreſſing their different qualities and attributes.

Bewaney, as the mother of the gods, is held in high veneration, but the other goddeſſes are always repreſented as the ſubordinate powers of their reſpective lords.

Brimha is ſaid, in Sanſkrit, to mean the wiſdom of God. On his head is a

crown. He is repreſented with four hands: in one he holds a ſceptre; in another the veds*; in a third a ring, or circle, as an emblem of eternity; and the fourth is empty, being ready to aſſiſt and protect his works. Near his image is the hanſe, or flamingo, on which he is ſuppoſed to perform his journies.

His goddeſs Seraſwaty is the patroneſs of imagination and invention, of harmony and eloquence. She is uſually repreſented with a muſical inſtrument in her hand; and is ſuppoſed to have invented the Devanagry letters, and the Sanſkrit language, in which the divine laws were conveyed to mankind.

" Sweet grace of Brimha's bed!
Thou, when thy glorious lord
Bade airy nothing breathe and bleſs his pow'r,
Sat'ſt with illumin'd head,
And, in ſublime accord,
Seven ſprightly notes to hail th' auſpicious hour,
Led'ſt from their ſecret bow'r:

---

* See Sketch V. p. 111.

They

They drank the air; they came
With many a ſparkling glance,
And knit the mazy dance,
Like yon bright orbs, that gird the ſolar flame,
Now parted, now combin'd,
Clear as thy ſpeech, and various as thy mind.

Young paſſions, at the ſound,
In ſhadowy forms aroſe,
O'er hearts, yet uncreated, ſure to reign:
Joy, that o'erleaps all bounds,
Grief, that in ſilence grows,
Hope, that with honey blends the cup of pain,
Pale fear, and ſtern diſdain,
Grim wrath's avenging band,
Love, nurs'd in dimple ſmooth,
That ev'ry pang can ſooth.

Thee, her great parent owns,
All ruling eloquence;
That, like full Ganga, pours her ſtream divine,
Alarming ſtates and thrones:
To fix the flying ſenſe
Of words, thy daughters, by the varied line,
(Stupendous art!) was thine;
Thine, with the pointed reed *,
To give primeval truth
Th' unfading bloom of youth,

And

* The pen employed by the Hindoos to write on paper is a ſmall reed. To write on leaves, which is the uſual method, they employ a pointed iron inſtrument,

And paint on deathleſs leaves high virtue's meed:
Fair Science, heav'n-born child,
And playful Fancy on thy boſom ſmil'd.

Who bids the fretted vene
Start from his deep repoſe,
And wakes to melody the quiv'ring frame?
What youth, with godlike mien,
O'er his bright ſhoulder throws
The verdant gourd that ſwells with ſtruggling flame:
Nared *, immortal name!
He, like his potent fire,
Creative ſpreads around
The mighty world of ſound,
And calls from ſpeaking wood ethereal fire;
While to th' accordant ſtrings
Of boundleſs heav'ns, and heav'nly deeds, he ſings.

---

ment, with which, properly ſpeaking, they engrave; the leaves are generally of the palm-tree; they are cut into long regular ſtripes, about an inch broad; being of a thick ſubſtance, and ſmooth hard ſurface, they may be kept for almoſt any ſpace of time, and the letters have the advantage of not being liable to be effaced or grow fainter. Their books conſiſt of a number of thoſe leaves, which by a hole pierced at one end are tied looſely together. After the writing is finiſhed, they ſometimes rub the leaves with a black powder, which filling up the inciſures, renders the letters more conſpicuous.

* Nared is the ſuppoſed ſon of Brimha, and was inventor of the Vene, a fretted inſtrument ſupported by two gourds.

But

But look! the jocund hours
A lovelier ſcene diſplay,
Young Hindol ſportive in his golden ſwing,
High canopied with flow'rs;
While Ragnies ever gay
Toſs the light cordage, and in cadence ſing
The ſweet return of ſpring."

In the argument to this poem, we are told, that every name, alluſion, or epithet, is taken from approved treatiſes. It is addreſſed to Seraſwaty, as goddeſs of harmony: the muſical modes are deified, and an original *rág*, or god of the mode, is ſuppoſed to preſide over each of the ſix ſeaſons* ; each *rág* is attended by five

---

* It muſt be here obſerved, that there are ſix ſeaſons in India :

Sĕĕſĭăr, the dewy ſeaſon.
Hĕĕmāt, the cold ſeaſon.
Vāſānt, mild ſeaſon, or ſpring.
Greeſhmā, hot ſeaſon.
Vārſā, the rainy ſeaſon.
Sārāt, breaking, or the breaking up, or end of the rains.

See WILKINS.

ragnies,

ragnies, or *nymphs of harmony*; each has eight ſons, or *genii*, of the ſame divine art; and to each *rág* and his family is appropriated a diſtinct ſeaſon, in which alone his melody can be ſung or played at preſcribed hours of the day and night. The mode of *Deipec*, or *Cupid the inflamer*, is ſuppoſed to be loſt; and a tradition is current in Hindoſtan, that a muſician who attempted to reſtore it was conſumed by fire from heaven.

"Ah! where has Deipec veil'd
His flame-encircled head?
Where flow his lays, too ſweet for mortal ears?
O loſs how long bewail'd!
Is yellow Cāmōd fled?
But, earth-born artiſt, hold!
If e'er thy ſoaring lyre
To Deipec's notes aſpire,
Thy ſtrings, thy bow'r, thy breaſt, with rapture bold,
Red light'ning ſhall conſume;
Nor can thy ſweeteſt ſong avert the doom."

The laſt couplet of the poem alludes to the celebrated place of pilgrimage, at the confluence of the *Ganga* and *Yamna*, which the

the Seraſwaty, another ſacred river, is ſuppoſed to join under ground.

" Theſe are thy wondrous arts,
Queen of the flowing ſpeech,
Thence Seraſwaty nam'd, and Vany bright!
Oh! joy of mortal hearts,
Thy myſtic wiſdom teach;
Expand thy leaves, and, with ethereal light,
Spangle the veil of night.
If Lepit pleaſe thee more,
Or Brahmy, awful name!
Dread Brahmy's aid we claim,
And thirſt, Vacdevy, for thy balmy lore,
Drawn from that rubied cave,
Where meek-ey'd pilgrims hail the triple wave.

In the temples of Viſhnou *, this god is generally worſhipped under the form of a human figure, having a circle of heads, and four hands, as emblems of an all-ſeeing and all-provident being. The figure of the *garoora*, a bird †, on which he is ſuppoſed

* See Sketch V. p. 109.

† This ſacred bird is a large brown kite, with a white head. The Brahmans at ſome of the temples of Viſhnou, accuſtom birds of that ſpecies that may be in the neighbourhood, to come at ſtated times to be fed, and call them by ſtriking a braſs plate.

to ride, is frequently to be found immediately in front of his image, and ſometimes ſitting on a ſerpent with ſeveral heads. They relate many different incarnations of Viſhnou. One of his names, in his preſerving quality, is Hāry.

" Nearly oppoſite to Sultan-gunge, a " conſiderable town in the province of " Bahar, there ſtands a rock of granite, " forming a ſmall iſland in the midſt of " the Ganges, known to Europeans by " the name of *the rock of Jehangueery*, " which is highly worthy the traveller's " notice for a vaſt number of images carv- " ed in relief upon every part of its ſur- " face. Amongſt theſe there is Hary, of " a gigantic ſize, recumbent upon a coiled " ſerpent, whoſe heads, which are nu- " merous, the artiſt has contrived to ſpread " into a kind of canopy over the ſleeping " god, and from each of its mouths iſſues a " forked tongue, ſeeming to threaten death

" to

" to any whom raſhneſs might prompt to
" diſturb him. The whole figure lies al-
" moſt detached from the block on which
" it is hewn; is finely imagined, and ex-
" ecuted with great ſkill. The Hindoos
" are taught to believe, that at the end of
" every *kalpa*, or creation, all things are
" abſorbed in the deity, and that in the
" interval to another creation, he repoſeth
" himſelf on the ſerpent *Seſha*, duration,
" and who is alſo called *Ananta*, or end-
" leſs *."

Lechemy is the conſort of Viſhnou, and is the goddeſs of abundance and proſperity.

Sheevah is repreſented under different human forms, and has a variety of names, but is generally called Sheevah and Mahadeg.

---

* Note of Mr. Wilkins to his tranſlation of the Heetopades.

Facing the image is that of an ox in a ſuppliant poſture; it being ſuppoſed, that this animal was ſelected by him as his favourite conveyance.

In his deſtroying quality he appears as a fierce man, with a ſnake turned round his neck.

He is alſo called the god of good and evil fortune; and as ſuch is repreſented with a creſcent in front of his crown.——"May "he, on whoſe diadem is a creſcent, cauſe "proſperity to the people of the earth *."

One of the names of his goddeſs is Gowry; who is alſo called Kaly, from kala, time; which by the Hindoo poets is always perſonified, and made the agent of deſtruction.

Varoona is the god of the ſeas and waters, and is ſometimes repreſented as riding on a crocodile.

---

* Heetopades.

Vayoo

Vayoo is the god of the winds, and rides on an antelope, with a ſabre in his right hand.

Agnee is the god of fire, has four arms, and rides on a ram.

The earth is perſonified by the goddeſs Vaſoodha, who, in a verſe of the Heetopades, is called Soerabhy, or the cow of plenty.

Nature is repreſented as a beautiful young woman, called Prakreety.

The ſun has ſeveral names and epithets. He is ſometimes called Sour and Shan, and king of the ſtars and planets. In the temple of Bis Eiſhuar at Benares, there is an ancient piece of ſculpture well executed, repreſenting this god ſitting in a car, drawn by a horſe with twelve heads, alluding to the twelve ſigns of the Zodiac *. But the horſe in general is repreſented with only ſeven heads.

---

* Mr. Foſter.

The

The name of his goddeſs is Sangia, and is ſuppoſed to be the mother of the river Jumna.

Chandara, or the moon, is alſo repreſented ſitting in a car, but drawn by antelopes, and holding a rabbit in the right hand.

Vreehaſpaty is the god of ſcience and learning; and his attendants, the Veedyadhares, or literally, profeſſors of ſcience, are beautiful young nymphs.

Ganes is the god of policy and prudence, and is worſhipped before any enterprize.

Veekrama is the god of victory. It is ſaid to have been the cuſtom to ſacrifice a horſe to him, by letting him looſe in a foreſt, and not again employing him.

Fame has ſeveral names, and is repreſented as a ſerpent with a variety of tongues.

Darma Deva is the god of virtue, and is ſometimes repreſented by the figure of a white bull.

Virſavana

Virſavana is the god of riches, and is repreſented as a man riding on a white horſe. He is likewiſe called Cobhair.

Dhan-wantary is the god of medicine. —"When life hath taken its departure, "though Dhan-wantary were thy phy- "ſician, what could he do *?"

Yam Rajah, or Darham Rajah, ſeems to hold the ſame offices with the Hindoos, that Pluto and Minos held with the Greeks. He is judge of the dead, and ruler of the infernal regions. He has a ſceptre in his hand, and rides on a buffalo. He was begot by Sour, or the ſun, on a daughter of Biſoo-karma, great architect of the heavenly manſions, and patron of artificers.

Darham Rajah's aſſiſtants are Chiter and Gopt. The former has the care of reporting the good, the latter, the bad actions of mankind. And that theſe may be exactly known, two genii attend as ſpies on

* Heetopades.

every one of the human race; the ſpy of Chiter on the right, and that of Gopt on the left. As ſoon as any man dies, the Jambouts, or meſſengers of death, convey his ſoul to Darham's tribunal, where his actions are proclaimed, and ſentence immediately paſſed upon him. The ſouls of the wicked, after being confined in Narekha*, and puniſhed according to their offences, are ſent back to the world to animate other bodies of men or beaſts, according to their actions and inclinations. Thoſe, whoſe conduct has been checkered with good and bad, likewiſe appear again on the ſtage of life: and thoſe trials, puniſhments, and tranſmigrations continue to be repeated, until they be corrected of every diſpoſition to vice. But the Hindoos ſhudder at the idea of eternal puniſhment, as being wholly incompatible with the juſtice and goodneſs of God.

---

* The name given to the infernal regions, which are divided into a variety of places, adapted to the different degrees of puniſhment.

Darham

Darham Rajah has no power over the ſouls of thoſe holy men, whoſe lives are ſpent in piety and benevolence, unbiaſſed by the hope of reward, or the dread of puniſhment. Theſe are conveyed by the genii to the upper regions of happineſs, and are afterwards admitted to Moukt, the ſupreme bliſs, or abſorption in the univerſal ſpirit.

In their mythology there are ſeveral accounts of Kriſhen and the nine Gopia, which correſpond with Apollo and the Muſes of the Greeks. He is repreſented as a young man, and ſometimes as playing on a Mourley or flute. He is likewiſe called Mohun, or the beloved; Mænoher, or the heart-catcher; Birge-rajah, Birge-put, and Birge-nat, from the country of Birge, near Matra, where he lived many years, and which was famous for the beauty of its women, moſt of whom were ſuppoſed to have partaken of his embraces.

The god of love has many epithets, deſcriptive of his powers, but the uſual one is Kama-deva, or, literally, the god of deſire.

In the argument of a hymn to this deity, publiſhed at Calcutta, Sir William Jones informs us, " that according to the " Hindoo mythology, he was the ſon of " Maya, or the general attracting power; " that he was married to Retty, or affec- " tion; and that his boſom friend is Vaſ- " ſant, or the ſpring: that he is repre- " ſented as a beautiful youth, ſometimes " converſing with his mother, or conſort, " in the midſt of his gardens and tem- " ples; ſometimes riding by moon-light " on a parrot, and attended by dancing " girls, or nymphs, the foremoſt of whom " bears his colours, which are a fiſh on a " red ground: that his favourite place of " reſort is a large tract of country round " Agra, and principally the plain of Ma- " tra, where Kriſhen alſo and the nine

" Gopia

" Gopia uſually ſpend the night with mu-
" ſic and dance: that his bow is of ſugar-
" cane, or flowers; the ſtring, of bees;
" and that his five arrows are each pointed
" with an Indian bloſſom, of a heating
" quality." Many of his names are mentioned in the hymn.

" What potent god from Agra's orient bow'rs
Floats through the lucid air; whilſt living flow'rs,
With ſunny twine, the vocal arbours wreathe,
And gales enamour'd heav'nly fragrance breathe?
Hail, power unknown! for at thy beck
Vales and groves their boſoms deck,
And every laughing bloſſom dreſſes,
With gems of dew, his muſky treſſes.
I feel, I feel, thy genial flame divine,
And hallow thee, and kiſs thy ſhrine.

Know'ſt thou not me?——
Yes, ſon of Maya, yes, I know
Thy bloomy ſhafts and cany bow,
Thy ſcaly ſtandard, thy myſterious arms,
And all thy pains and all thy charms.

Almighty Cama! or doth Smara bright,
Or proud Ananga, give thee more delight?
Whate'er thy ſeat, whate'er thy name,
Seas, earth, and air thy reign proclaim:
All to thee their tribute bring,
And hail thee univerſal king.

Thy conſort mild, Affection, ever true,
Graces thy ſide, her veſt of glowing hue,
And in her train twelve blooming maids advance,
Touch golden ſtrings, and knit the mirthful dance.
Thy dreadful implements they bear,
And wave them in the ſcented air,
Each with pearls her neck adorning,
Brighter than the tears of morning.
Thy crimſon enſign, which before them flies,
Decks with new ſtars the ſapphire ſkies.

God of the flow'ry ſhafts and flow'ry bow,
Delight of all above and all below!
Thy lov'd companion, conſtant from his birth
In heav'n clep'd Vaſſant, and gay Spring on earth,
Weaves thy green robe, and flaunting bow'rs,
And from the clouds draws balmy ſhow'rs,
He with freſh arrows fills thy quiver,
(Sweet the gift, and ſweet the giver,)
And bids the various-warbling throng
Burſt the pent bloſſoms with their ſong.

He bends the luſcious cane, and twiſts the ſtring,
With bees how ſweet! but ah, how keen their ſting!
He with fine flow'rets tips thy ruthleſs darts,
Which through five ſenſes pierce enraptur'd hearts;
Strong Champa, rich in od'rous gold,
Warm Amer, nurs'd in heav'nly mould,
Dry Nagkezer, in ſilver ſmiling,
Hot Kiticum, our ſenſe beguiling,
And laſt to kindle fierce the ſcorching flame,
Loveſhaft, which gods bright Bela name.

Can

Can men reſiſt thy pow'r, when Kriſhen yields,
Kriſhen, who ſtill in Matra's holy fields
Tunes harps immortal, and to ſtrains divine
Dances by moonlight with the Gopia nine?

O thou for ages born, yet ever young,
For ages may thy Bramin's lay be ſung;
And when thy Lory ſpreads his em'rald wings,
To waft thee high above the tower of kings,
Whilſt o'er thy throne the moon's pale light
Pours her ſoft radiance through the night,
And to each floating cloud diſcovers
The haunts of bleſt or joyleſs lovers,
Thy milder influence to thy bard impart,
To warm, but not conſume, his heart."

When Tanjore was taken by the Engliſh, a curious picture was found repreſenting Kamadeva riding on an elephant, whoſe body was compoſed of the figures of ſeven young women, entwined in ſo whimſical but ingenious a manner as to exhibit the ſhape of that enormous animal *.

* Mr. Forſter.

Several pieces of ſculpture of the ſame figure, in baſs-relief, have been met with in other parts of Hindoſtan.

The Eros of the Greeks is found riding on, and guiding a lion. The Hindoos place Kama on an elephant, the ſtrongeſt of the brute creation, and perhaps the moſt difficult to be tamed, but afterwards the moſt docile. Yet, notwithſtanding this affinity, it is poſſible the idea may have been original with both. They were both poliſhed nations; the power of love is every where felt; and it may naturally have occurred to people of lively and poetical imaginations, to paint the influence of that paſſion, by repreſenting the infant god governing the fierceſt and ſtrongeſt animals.

Lingam, ſimilar to the Priapus or Phallus of the ancients, is always to be found in the temple of Sheevah, and is worſhipped to obtain fecundity. For as the Hindoos depend on their children for performing thoſe ceremonies to their manes, which they believe tend to mitigate puniſhment in a future ſtate, they conſider the

the being deprived of them as a ſevere misfortune, and the ſign of an offended God.

Amongſt the fables that are told to account for the origin of the worſhip to Lingam, is the following:

"Certain devotees in a remote time, had acquired great renown and reſpect; but the purity of the heart was wanting; nor did their motives and ſecret thoughts correſpond with their profeſſions and exterior conduct. They affected poverty, but were attached to the things of this world; and the princes and nobles were conſtantly ſending them offerings. They ſeemed to ſequeſter themſelves from the world; they lived retired from the towns; but their dwellings were commodious, and their women numerous and handſome. But nothing can be hid from the gods, and Sheevah reſolved to expoſe them to ſhame. He deſired Prakreety * to accom-

* Nature. See page 159.

pany

pany him; and aſſumed the appearance of a Pandaram of a graceful form. Prakreety appeared as herſelf, a damſel of matchleſs beauty. She went where the devotees were aſſembled with their diſciples, waiting the riſing ſun to perform their ablutions * and religious ceremonies. As ſhe advanced, the refreſhing breeze moving her flowing robe, ſhowed the exquiſite ſhape, which it ſeemed intended to conceal. With eyes caſt down, though ſometimes opening with a timid but a tender look, ſhe approached them, and with a low enchanting voice deſired to be admitted to the ſacrifice. The devotees gazed on her with aſtoniſhment. The ſun appeared, but the purifications were forgotten; the things for the Pooja † lay neglected; nor was any worſhip thought of

* The Hindoos never bathe, nor perform their ablutions, whilſt the ſun is below the horizon.

† Pooja, is properly worſhip.

but

but that to her. Quitting the gravity of their manners, they gathered round her, as the flies round the lamp at night, attracted by its ſplendour, but conſumed by its flame. They aſked from whence ſhe came; whither ſhe was going? — "Be "not offended with us for approaching "thee; forgive us for our importunities. "But thou art incapable of anger, thou "who art made to convey bliſs; to thee, "who mayeſt kill by indifference, indig- "nation and reſentment are unknown. "But whoever thou mayſt be, whatever "motive or accident may have brought "thee amongſt us, admit us into the num- "ber of thy ſlaves; let us at leaſt have "the comfort to behold thee."

"Here the words faultered on the lip; the ſoul ſeemed ready to take its flight; the vow was forgotten, and the policy of years was deſtroyed.

"Whilſt the devotees were loſt in their paſſions, and abſent from their homes,

Sheevah

Sheevah entered their village with a muſical inſtrument in his hand, playing and ſinging like ſome of thoſe who ſolicit charity. At the ſound of his voice the women immediately quitted their occupations; they ran to ſee from whom it came. He was beautiful as Kriſhen on the plains of Matra *. Some dropped their jewels without turning to look for them; others let fall their garments without perceiving that they diſcovered thoſe abodes of pleaſure, which jealouſy as well as decency has ordered to be concealed. All preſſed forward with their offerings; all wiſhed to ſpeak; all wiſhed to be taken notice of; and bringing flowers and ſcattering them before him, ſaid: "Aſkeſt thou alms! thou, who art made "to govern hearts! Thou, whoſe coun- "tenance is freſh as the morning! whoſe "voice is the voice of pleaſure; and thy

* Kriſhen of Matra may be called the Apollo of the Hindoos. See page 163.

"breath

" breath like that of Vaſſant * in the " opening roſe! Stay with us and we will " ſerve thee; nor will we trouble thy " repoſe, but only be jealous how to pleaſe " thee."

" The Pandaram continued to play, and ſung the loves of Kama †, of Kriſhen, and the Gopia; and ſmiling the gentle ſmiles of fond deſire, he led them to a neighbouring grove, that was conſecrated to pleaſure and retirement. Sour began to gild the weſtern mountains, nor were they offended at the retiring day.

" But the deſire of repoſe ſucceeds the waſte of pleaſure. Sleep cloſed the eyes and lulled the ſenſes. In the morning the Pandaram was gone. When they awoke, they looked round with aſtoniſhment, and again caſt their eyes upon the ground. Some directed their looks to thoſe, who had been formerly remarked for their

---

* Vaſſant, the ſpring.

† Kama, the god of love. See page 164.

ſcrupulous

ſcrupulous manners; but their faces were covered with their veils. After ſitting a while in ſilence, they aroſe, and went back to their houſes with ſlow and troubled ſteps. The devotees returned about the ſame time from their wanderings after Prakreety. The days that followed were days of embarraſſment and ſhame. If the women had failed in their modeſty, the devotees had broken their vows. They were vexed at their weakneſs; they were ſorry for what they had done; yet the tender ſigh ſometimes broke forth, and the eye often turned to where the men firſt ſaw the maid; the women the Pandaram.

" But the people began to perceive, that what the devotees foretold came not to paſs. Their diſciples, in conſequence, neglected to attend them; and the offerings from the princes and the nobles became leſs frequent than before. They then performed various penances; they ſought for ſecret places among the woods, unfrequented

quented by man; and having at laſt ſhut their eyes from the things of this world, and retired within themſelves in deep meditation, they diſcovered, that Sheevah was the author of their misfortunes. Their underſtanding being imperfect; inſtead of bowing the head with humility, they were inflamed with anger; inſtead of contrition for their hypocriſy, they ſought for vengeance. They performed new ſacrifices and incantations, which were only allowed to have effect in the end to ſhow the extreme folly of man in not ſubmitting to the will of heaven. Their incantations produced a tyger, whoſe mouth was like a cavern, and his voice like thunder amongſt the mountains. They ſent him againſt Sheevah, who, with Prakreety, was amuſing himſelf in the vale. He ſmiled at their weakneſs; and killing the tyger at one blow with his club, he covered himſelf with his ſkin. Seeing themſelves

ſelves fruſtrated in this attempt, the devotees had recourſe to another, and ſent ſerpents againſt him of the moſt deadly kind. But on approaching him they became harmleſs, and he twiſted them round his neck. They then ſent their curſes and imprecations againſt him, but they all recoiled upon themſelves. Not yet diſheartened by all theſe diſappointments, they collected all their prayers, their penances, their charities, and other good works, the moſt acceptable of all ſacrifices, and demanding in return only vengeance againſt Sheevah, they ſent a conſuming fire to deſtroy his genital parts. Sheevah, incenſed at this attempt, turned the fire with indignation againſt the human race; and mankind would ſoon have been deſtroyed, had not Viſhnou, alarmed at the danger, implored him to ſuſpend his wrath. At his intreaties Sheevah relented. But it was ordained, that in his temples thoſe parts

parts ſhould be worſhipped, which the falſe devotees had impiouſly attempted to deſtroy."

Thoſe who dedicate themſelves to the ſervice of Lingam, ſwear to obſerve inviolable chaſtity. They do not, like the prieſts of Atys, deprive themſelves of the means of breaking their vows; but were it diſcovered, that they had in any way departed from them, the puniſhment is death. They go naked; but being conſidered as ſanctified perſons, the women approach them without ſcruple, nor is it thought that their modeſty ſhould be offended by it. Huſbands, whoſe wives are barren, ſolicit them to come to their houſes, or ſend their wives to worſhip Lingam at the temples; and it is ſuppoſed, that the ceremonies on this occaſion, if performed with proper zeal, are generally productive of the deſired effect.

The Hindoos have demi-gods *(dii minoris gentis)* who, they ſay, enjoy immortality

by drinking a beverage called Amrut. They are the tutelar deities of almoſt all the aërial and terreſtrial regions; and every mountain, wood, river, town, or village, has its guardian divinity.

Their writings abound with fanciful relations of the feats of their demi-gods and heroes, very much reſembling thoſe of Bacchus, Hercules, and Theſeus: and the wars of Ram with Ravana, tyrant of the iſland of Ceylon, form the ſubject of a beautiful epic poem, called the Ramayan.

Perhaps in no literary reſearch we are more liable to be deceived, than in endeavouring to prove the near affinity of one nation to another, by a ſimilarity in particular cuſtoms and opinions. But notwithſtanding the weakneſs of argument grounded upon ſuch a foundation, from what has been already ſaid, there appears ſo near a reſemblance between the mythology of the Hindoos, and that of the Egyptians and Greeks, as inclines us to believe, that

that they originate from one common parent. The diſcuſſion of this point, however, I leave to thoſe, who are abler to perform it; my wiſh, in the preſent work, being only to relate ſuch facts as may perhaps open the way to further inveſtigation and diſcovery.

SKETCH IX.

Devotion and Worſhip of the Hindoos.

THE devotion of the Hindoos conſiſts in going to the temples; in occaſionally performing certain religious ceremonies at home; in prayers, faſtings, and other penances; in making offerings, both on their own account, and for the ſouls of their dead relations; in frequent ablutions, and in charities and pious works.

According to the rules of their religion, they ought to pray thrice a day—in the morning; at noon; and in the evening—with their faces turned towards the eaſt. They ſhould at the ſame time perform their ablutions, and when they have an opportunity, ſhould prefer a running ſtream to ſtanding

ſtanding water. But it is an indiſpenſable duty to waſh themſelves before meals.

The offerings generally conſiſt of money, fruits, flowers, rice, ſpices made at the temples, and incenſe. The offering on account of the dead is a cake, called Peenda, which ceremony is performed on the days of the new and full moon.

It has been aſſerted by ſome writers, that there is a tradition in Hindoſtan, that its devotion was formerly ſanguinary, and that even human ſacrifices were offered, as the moſt acceptable to their gods. But if ſuch a tradition exiſts, the truth of it is at leaſt extremely queſtionable. As far as we can inveſtigate, the Hindoos appear to have been what they are at preſent, mild and humane; and we know not any trace of a cuſtom ſo barbarous, unleſs we conſider in that light thoſe voluntary ſacrifices which ſome enthuſiaſts make of themſelves.

It is however true, that in their ſacred writings mention is made of the Aſmaidh

Jug *, or ſacrifice of the horſe; of the ſacrifice of the white elephant; of the Gomaidh Jug, or ſacrifice of the cow; and even of the Narmaidh Jug, or human ſacrifice. But it muſt be obſerved, that the things repreſented as fit to be ſacrificed, have ſo many peculiarities, that we may conclude they are never to be found. If they have all the requiſites that are deſcribed, it is ſaid they will immediately regenerate from their aſhes in the ſight of the perſons preſent at the ſacrifice; and that unleſs they do ſo, it denotes the diſpleaſure of the Supreme Being with thoſe who may have cauſed it to be performed. Under that denunciation, and with ſo many difficulties, we may ſuppoſe that ſuch ſacrifices have ſeldom or never been made; and we are at a loſs to account for their being mentioned in their religious writings, unleſs it be to indicate, that nothing in this

* Jug, is ſacrifice.

life

life is too ſacred or valuable, to exempt it from being devoted to the ſervice of the Almighty. The ſubject is not unworthy the inveſtigation of the curious; but to what I have ſaid, I can but add, that the only eſtabliſhed ſacrifice of any living thing, that I have heard of, is the ſacrifice of the buffalo to Bawaney, at the feaſt of the Doſhra, which is obſerved to celebrate her victory over the great, but wicked conqueror Aſoor Mehkhaſer towards the end of the Sutty Youg.

The worſhip of the Hindoos may be divided into two ſorts, the Narganey Pooja, or worſhip of the inviſible; and the Sarganey Pooja, or the worſhip before idols. But the followers of the latter are by far the moſt numerous: the former, comparatively ſpeaking, are but few, and in the ſtrict ſenſe of the word may be termed deiſts. They have either retained the true meaning of their religion from the beginning, or have in later times aboliſhed the fables of

the Brahmans, and reſtored it to its original purity. This ſeems to have been a principal object with Veias in his dialogues between Kriſhna and Arjoon; and it appears, that even in his time, above four thouſand years ago, the adoration of the true god was confounded and loſt in an artful and complicated mythology *.

At the hours of public worſhip the people reſort to the temples. They begin by performing the ablutions at the tank, which is either to be found in front of the building, or in the great temples in the centre of the firſt court †. Leaving their ſlippers, or ſandals, on the border of the tanks, they are admitted to a periſtile or veſtibule, oppoſite to the building which contains the idols; where they obſerve great reverence

* See the Sketch on mythology.

† Some of the temples are of an oblong figure, and conſiſt of two or more courts, immediately following each other. Some have only one incloſure, with the chapel, where the images are placed in the center of it.

and

and devotion; and whilſt the Brahmans perform the ceremonies of the Jug or Pooja, the dancing women occaſionally dance in the court, ſinging the praiſes of the divinity to the ſounds of various muſical inſtruments.

The Pooja may likewiſe be performed at home before the houſehold images. Thoſe who are to aſſiſt at it begin by waſhing themſelves. They likewiſe waſh the room or place deſtined for the ceremony; and then ſpread it with a new mat, or with a carpet that is only uſed for that purpoſe. On this they place the Sing Aſin *, or throne, which is generally made of wood richly carved and gilt, though ſometimes of gold and ſilver. The idol being put on the Sing Aſin, the things neceſſary for the Pooja are laid upon the mat; conſiſting of a bell of metal; a conch ſhell to blow on; a cenſer filled with ral, bezoin, ſugar, and

* Sing, is literally Lion, but is a term of diſtinction given to princes and great men.

other

other articles; which is kept conſtantly burning, pieces of bezoin and ral being now and then thrown into it. Flowers ſeparately and in garlands are ſcattered upon the mat. The idol is put into a metal baſon, and being waſhed by pouring the water firſt on the head, is wiped and replaced on the Sing Aſin. Cups or plates of gold, ſilver, or other metals, are ſpread before it, ſome filled with rice, others with different ſorts of fruits, with dry ſweetmeats and with cow's milk. The worſhippers, repeat certain prayers and Aſhlocks, or verſes in praiſe of the god whom the idol repreſents.

The Brahman, who performs the ceremony, occaſionally rings the bell and blows the ſhell. He gives the Tiluk, or mark on the forehead, to the idol, by dipping his right thumb in the duſt of ſandal wood, or other ſubſtance that has been prepared for that purpoſe, beginning at the top of the noſe, and advancing upwards.

But

But the colour, the ſize, and ſhape of the Tiluk depend on the tribe the worſhippers may be of; ſome tribes being marked with vermilion, others with turmerick, and ſome with a kind of white earth like chalk. A Brahman generally marks all the perſons preſent in the ſame manner. The fruit and other articles of food that were ſpread before the idol, are divided amongſt them; and the idol is then carefully wrapped up, and with the Sing Aſin and the reſt of the things uſed in the ceremony, kept in a ſecure place until another Pooja be performed.

A veneration for fire ſeems to have been common to all the ancient eaſtern nations, and it is evident, that the Hindoos, if they do not worſhip it, hold it in a ſort of religious reſpect. Every day at ſunriſe the prieſts go to ſome river, or to the tanks of their temples, to perform the Sandivaney or worſhip to Brahma the Supreme. After having waſhed themſelves, taking water in the

the right hand, they throw it in the air before and behind them, invoking the Deity, and ſinging forth thankſgiving and praiſe. They then throw ſome towards the ſun, expreſſing their gratitude for his having again appeared to diſpel the darkneſs of the night.

Mr. Wilkins informs us, that they are enjoined to light up a fire at certain times, which muſt be produced by the friction of two pieces of wood of a particular kind; that with a fire thus procured all their ſacrifices are burnt; the nuptial altar flames; and the funeral pile is kindled.

In the Heetopades it is ſaid; "Fire is "the ſuperior of the Brahmans; the Brah-"man is the ſuperior of the tribes; the "huſband is the ſuperior of women; but "the ſtranger is the ſuperior of all."

SKETCH X.

Learning and Philoſophy of the Brahmans.

ALL the ancient ſacred and profane writings of the Hindoos are in the Sanſkrit language, which is now only known to the Pundits *, or men of learning; and is neither ſpoken nor underſtood by the reſt of the nation. Yet as Sanſkrit words are ſtill found in uſe over the whole peninſula; and as moſt of the proper names of perſons and ancient places are derived from that language, it is not im-

* Pundit is a Sanſkrit word, and an honorary title, ſignifying doctor or philoſopher.

Mr. Wilkins informs us, that Sanſkrit is compoſed from *San*, a prepoſition, ſignifying completion, and *ſkrita*, done or finiſhed.

probable, that it was once univerſal, however remote that period may be.

If we compare the Brahmans of the preſent day with the Brahmans * of antiquity, we ſhall, in almoſt every feature of their character, perceive the ſtrongeſt reſemblance. The difference that may exiſt between them, may partly have inſenſibly taken place in the lapſe of time; but muſt chiefly be aſcribed to the revolutions that have happened in their government.

The ancient Brahmans living in an age when the Hindoo empire flouriſhed, cultivated ſcience with an encouragement and ſucceſs, of which their oppreſſed poſterity cannot boaſt. Beſides the ſtudy of the ſacred, moral, and metaphyſical writings of their nation, a principal part of their ſcientific purſuits ſeems to have been di-

* The words are evidently the ſame, and derive their origin from Brahma, God.

rected

rected to aſtronomy, natural philoſophy, and ſome branches of mathematics *.

But though the Brahmans may be inferior to their anceſtors, as philoſophers and men of ſcience, their caſt is ſtill the only repoſitory of the literature that yet remains: to them alone is entruſted the education of youth; they are the ſole interpreters of the law, and the only expounders of their religion.

Bernier, in his letter, dated 4th October 1667, gives the following account of the literary purſuits of the Brahmans:

---

* A great reſemblance may be found between the Gymnoſophiſts of Ethiopia and the Brahmans, both in their tenets and cuſtoms; and according to Philoſtrates, they were deſcended from them. He ſays the Gymnoſophiſts who ſettled in Ethiopia came from India; being driven from thence for the murder of their king near the Ganges. Lucian ſays, that the ſcience of aſtronomy came originally from Ethiopia; perhaps therefore from thoſe Gymnoſophiſts who came from Hindoſtan. Strabo, lib. 15. ſays, that the Brahmans cultivated natural philoſophy and aſtronomy.

"La

" La ville de Benares, eſt l'ecole
" generale, et comme l'Athenes de toute la
" gentilité des Indes, où les Brahmens et les
" Religieux, qui ſont ceux qui s'appliquent
" à l'etude, ſe rendent. Ils n'ont point de
" Colleges ni de claſſes ordonnées, comme
" chez nous; cela me ſemble plus tenir de
" cette façon d'ecole des anciens, les maitres
" etant diſperſes par la ville dans leur
" maiſons, et principalement dans les Jar-
" dins des Fauxbourgs, ou les gros mar-
" chands les ſouffrent. De ces maitres les
" uns ont quatre diſciples, les autres ſix ou
" ſept, et les plus renommes douze ou
" quinze tout au plus, qui paſſent les dix
" et les douze années avec eux. Toute
" cette etude eſt fort froide, parceque la
" plûpart des Indiens ſont d'une humeur
" lente et pareſſeuſe; la chaleur du pays
" et leur manger y contribuant beaucoup.

" Leur premiere etude eſt ſur le Han-
" ſcrit *, qui eſt une langue tout à fait

* Or Sanſkrit.

differente

" differente de l'Indienne ordinaire et " qui n'eſt ſu que des Pundits. Elle s'ap- " pelle Hanſcrit, qui veut dire langue " pure, et parcequ'ils tiennent que ce fut " dans cette langue que Dieu, par le " moyen de Brahma *, leur publia les " quatre Beths qu'ils eſtiment livres ſacres; " ils l'appellent langue ſainte et divine: " ils pretendant même qu'elle eſt auſſi an- " cienne que Brahma, dont ils ne comp- " tent l'âge que par Leeques, ou centaines " de mille ans; mais je voudrois " caution de cette etrange antiquité. " Quoiqu'il en ſoit, on ne ſauroit nier, " ce me ſemble, qu'elle ne ſoit tres an- " cienne, puiſque leurs livres de religion, " qu'il eſt ſans doute beaucoup, ne ſont " ecrits que dans cette langue, et que de " plus, elle a ſes auteurs de philoſophie, " la medicine en vers, quelques autres

* He means Brimha.

" poeſies, et quantité d'autres livres, dont " j'ai vu une grande ſale toute pleine dans " Benares.

" Apres qu'ils ont apris le Kanſcrit, " ce qui leur eſt tres difficile, parcequ'ils " n'ont point de grammaire qui vaille, ils " ſe mettent pour l'ordinaire à lire le Pu- " rane, qui eſt comme un interprete et " abregé des Beths, parceque ces Beths " ſont fort gros, du moins ſi ce ſont ceux " qu'on me montra à Benares: ils ſont " même tres rares; juſques-là que mon " Agah ne les a jamais pu trouver à " acheter, quelque diligence qu'il ait pu " faire; auſſi les tiennent ils fort ſecrets, " de crainte que les Mahometans ne met- " tent la main deſſus, et ne les faſſent " bruler, comme ils ont deja fait pluſieurs " fois.

" Entre leurs philoſophes il y en a prin- " cipalement ſix fort fameux, qui font ſix " ſectes differentes. Les uns s'attachent à

" celle

" celle ci, et les autres à celle là, ce qui " fait de la difference, et cauſe même de la " jalouſie entre les Pundets, ou docteurs ; " car ils ſçavent qu'un tel eſt de cette ſecte, " et un tel d'une autre, et chacun d'eux " pretend que ſa doctrine eſt bien meilleure " que celles des autres, et qu'elle eſt même " plus conforme aux Beths.

" Tous ces livres parlent des premiers " principes des chôſes, mais fort differe- " ment. Les uns tiennent que tout eſt " compoſé des petits corps, qui ſont in- " diviſibles, non pas à cauſe de leur ſoli- " dité, dureté, et reſiſtance, mais à rai- " ſon de leur petiteſſe, et diſent ainſi plu- " ſieurs chofes enſuite qui approchent des " opinions de Democrite et d'Epicure.

" Les autres diſent, que tout eſt com- " poſé de matiere et de forme, mais pas " un d'eux ne s'explique nettement ſur la " matiere, et bien moins encore ſur la " forme.

" D'autres veulent que tout ſoit compoſé
" des quatre elemens et du neant.

" Il y en a auſſi qui veulent que la lu-
" miere et les tenebres ſoient les premiers
" principes.

" Il y en a encore qui admettent pour
" principe la privation, ou plutot les pri-
" vations, qu'ils diſtinguent du neant.

" Il y en a enfin qui pretendent que tout
" eſt compoſe d'accidens.

" Touchant ces principes en general,
" ils ſont tous d'accord qu'ils ſont eter-
" nels."

The Hindoos, like ſome of the ancients, ſuppoſe that the ſoul is an emanation of the ſpirit of God breathed into mortals. But their manner of expreſſing this idea is more ſublime; for inſtead of calling it a portion of the divine ſpirit, they compare it to the heat and light ſent forth from the ſun, which neither leſſens nor divides his own eſſence.

Gowta-

Gowtama *, an ancient author of a metaphyſical work, called Nayaya-darſana, makes a diſtinction between what he calls the divine ſoul, and the vital ſoul. The firſt, he ſays, is eternal, immaterial, and indiviſible; reſembling in that reſpect the great Spirit from whence it came: and he thinks it would be monſtrous to imagine, that this eſſence or ſpirit ſhould be affected by the paſſions, to which mankind is ſubject. The ſecond, he ſays, is a ſubtle element, which pervades all animated things; and he obſerves, that it would be as abſurd to ſuppoſe that deſire or paſſions of any kind could exiſt in organized matter only, as to ſuppoſe they could exiſt in a piece of mechaniſm that was the work of human ingenuity. Taking it then for granted, that mankind partake in a certain

* This author is well known to the learned Brahmans. He is mentioned in the Heetopades as a prophet; and the late Colonel Dow tells us, that he depoſited a copy of one of the volumes of his work in the Britiſh Muſeum.

degree of the ſpirit of God, which is not liable to human paſſions; and that organized matter, merely as ſuch, cannot poſſeſs any; the vital ſoul, or pervading element, is that which gives birth to our deſires.

In ſpeaking of man, he mentions, beſides the five external ſenſes of ſeeing, hearing, taſting, ſmelling, and feeling, one internal ſenſe; by which we preſume he means intellectual perception.

He ſays, that the external ſenſes convey into the mind diſtinct repreſentations of things; and thereby furniſh it with materials for its internal operations; but that unleſs the mind act in conjunction with the ſenſes, their operation is loſt. Thus, for inſtance, a perſon in deep contemplation is frequently inſenſible to ſound, nor does he perceive an object that is immediately before his eyes. That the ideas thus acquired by means of the external ſenſes, produce new ideas by the internal

operation

operation of the mind, which have alſo the power of exciting ſenſations of pleaſure or of pain.

Reaſon, he ſays, is the faculty that enables us to conclude (from what falls under our immediate obſervation) upon things at the time not perceptible; as, when we ſee ſmoke, we know that it proceeds from fire. This reaſon, he continues, depends on our ideas, and is in proportion to the nature and extent of them; and therefore wherever our ideas are indiſtinct, our reaſon muſt be imperfect.

By perception, he ſays, we have an immediate knowledge of things in a certain degree, without the aid of reaſon; as of a horſe, a tree, of hard or ſoft, ſweet or bitter, hot or cold.

He then goes into a diſcuſſion of inference; takes notice of true and falſe inferences, and of things that can be demonſtrated, and of thoſe that cannot.

Memory, which he ſeems to take in a very comprehenſive ſenſe, and which he almoſt confounds with imagination, may, he ſays, be employed on things preſent as to time, but abſent as to place; on things paſt, and on things in *expectation*. He calls memory, the repoſitory of knowledge, from which ideas already acquired, may be occaſionally revived and called into action.

In ſpeaking of letters, he ſays, by that heavenly invention a certain ſignification being given to figures and characters, the ſight of them ſerves to revive ideas that have been neglected, or were not in action; as well as to convey others we were unacquainted with. By theſe, he ſays, we may increaſe our knowledge by contemplative experience; by theſe the actions and diſcoveries, and learning of men in remote ages, have been tranſmitted to us: by theſe the virtues or vices of thoſe of our own times will be tranſmitted to poſterity;

terity; and by theſe we may converſe with thoſe we love, however far they may be removed from us. He then invokes Seraſwaty, the goddeſs of ſcience, by whom they are ſuppoſed to have been invented.

Treating of duration, he ſays, that as we cannot have an idea of its beginning or end, it cannot in its extent be brought within our comprehenſion: that the duration, which is obvious to our conception, by means of motion and ſucceſſion, is the ſpace between one event and another; as the ſpace from the firſt appearance of the ſun in the morning till he diſappears in the evening; and from his diſappearing till he appears again; which definite ſpace is called time:—that men having invented a mode of meaſuring time, or intermediate duration, applied it to meaſure the revolutions of the planets, from whence proceeded the diviſions of time, called years, months, and days, without which inven-

tion

tion our knowledge would be confuſed, and hiſtory unintelligible.

He ſeems to hint at the folly of conjectures about the beginning or duration of the world. But as this, we preſume, would not be orthodox with the Brahmans, his ſentiments on that ſubject are ſo expreſſed, as to leave great latitude for explanation.

In ſpeaking of the order of nature, as eſtabliſhed by the Supreme Being, he obſerves, that it univerſally reigns in all his works; that he therein ſhows us, that nothing can be produced without a firſt cauſe; and he aſks, what is chance, or accident, but a thing of momentary exiſtence, yet always produced by a preceding cauſe.

In treating of providence and free-will, he ſuppoſes, that the Supreme Being, having eſtabliſhed the order of nature, leaves her to proceed in her operations, and man

to

to act under the impulse of his desires, restrained and conducted by his reason. The brutes, he says, act by that impulse only, and employ their natural force or activity simply in the state they were given to them. But that man, by means of his mental faculties, governs the fiercest animals, employs the strongest and swiftest for his use, discovers the nature and qualities of every thing the earth produces, and invents mechanic powers far exceeding natural force. He then goes on to show, that these qualities must proceed from some great and invisible principle, which God has not imparted to the brute creation, and whose existence must be separate from, and independent of organized matter. He observes, that this can no more be doubted, than it can be doubted that the elephant is stronger than the deer, or the deer swifter than the tortoise. But to ask why it should be so, or how it is, would perhaps be impious, and as absurd

ſurd as to inquire why God created any of the animals which inhabit the earth, or any of the fiſhes that live in the waters. That we can never be ſufficiently grateful for the portion of that ſpirit he has given us, comparatively limited as it may be; that having left us unacquainted with the extent of it, we ſtill go on in our reſearches, in the hope of acquiring farther knowledge, and of making freſh diſcoveries; and that, by a proper uſe of it, we may raiſe our minds above the things of this world, and render ourſelves ſuperior to its events.

Treating of a future ſtate, he ſays, that ſuch as during their abode on earth have perſevered in the practice of piety and virtue, have worſhipped God purely from gratitude, love, and admiration, and have done good, without being induced either by the fear of puniſhment, or the hope of reward, will not ſtand in need of being purified in Naraka, or of again coming into this world to occupy other forms, but will

will be immediately admitted to celeſtial happineſs.

This may ſufficiently ſerve as a ſpecimen of the reaſoning of this ingenious Hindoo philoſopher.

In the dialogue quoted above, Kriſhna ſays to Arjoon:

" Know that every thing which is pro-
" duced in nature, reſults from the union
" of Keſhtra and Keſhtragna, matter and
" ſpirit.

" Learn that Prakreety, nature, and
" Poorooſh, are without beginning.

" Poorooſh is that ſuperior being who
" is called Maheſwar, the great god, the
" moſt high ſpirit.

" Karma is that emanation, from which
" proceedeth the generation of natural
" beings.

" As the all-moving Akaſh * from the
" minuteneſs of its parts, paſſeth every

* Akaſh comes neareſt to the ether of Profeſſor Euler, being more ſubtle than air.

" where

" where unaffected, even ſo the omnipo-
" tent ſpirit remaineth in the body unaf-
" fected. And as the ſun illumines the
" world, even ſo doth the ſpirit enlighten
" the body. They who with the eye of
" wiſdom perceive the body and the ſpirit
" to be diſtinct, and that there is a final
" releaſe from the animal nature, go to
" the ſupreme.

" Theſe bodies, which envelope the ſouls
" that inhabit them, are declared to be
" finite beings. The ſoul is not a thing of
" which a man may ſay, it hath been, or
" is about to be, or is to be hereafter; for
" it is a thing without birth, conſtant
" and eternal, and is not to be deſtroyed.
" As a man throweth away old garments
" and putteth on new, even ſo the ſoul.
" The weapon divideth it not, the fire
" burneth it not, the wind drieth it not;
" for it is indiviſible, inconſumable, in-
" corruptible, and is not to be dried away.
" Therefore, believing it to be thus, thou
" ſhouldſt not grieve.

" It is even a portion of myſelf, that in " this world is the univerſal ſpirit of all " things. It draweth together the five " ſenſes, and the *mind*, which is the ſixth, " and Eſwar *, preſideth over them. The " fooliſh ſee it not, but thoſe who induſ- " triouſly apply their minds to meditation, " may perceive this.

" There are three Goon ariſing from " Prakreety; Satwa, truth; Raja, paſſion; " and Tama, darkneſs. The Satwa Goon " is clear, and entwineth the ſoul with " ſweet and pleaſant conſequences. The " love of riches, intemperance, and inordi- " nate deſires are produced by the pre- " valency of the Raja Goon; and ſottiſh- " neſs, idleneſs, gloomineſs, and diſtrac- " tion of thought are the tokens of the " Tama Goon. If the mortal frame be " diſſolved whilſt the Satwa prevaileth, the " ſoul proceedeth to the regions of thoſe

* One of the names of the Supreme Being.

" beings,

" beings, who are acquainted with the " Moſt High. But if it be diſſolved, whilſt " the Raja prevaileth, the ſoul is born again " in one of thoſe who are attached to the " fruits of their actions. And in like manner, " if it be diſſolved while the Tama is pre- " dominant, it is conveyed into ſome irra- " tional being.

" He who conceiveth the Poorooſh and " the Prakreety together with the Goon, to " be even as I have deſcribed them, is not " again ſubject to mortal birth.

" Thoſe, who conſtantly watch over " their inordinate deſires, are no longer " confounded in their minds, and aſcend to " that place which endureth for ever. " Neither the ſun, nor the moon, nor the " the fire, enlighteneth that place which is " the ſupreme manſion of my abode.

" He, my ſervant, who ſerving me " alone with due attenion, has overcome " the influence of the Raja and Tama Goon,

" is

" is formed to be abſorbed in Brahm the
" Supreme.

" There are who know not what it is to
" proceed in virtue, or recede from vice;
" nor is veracity, or the practice of good, to
" be found in them. They ſay, the world
" is without beginning and without end,
" and without an Eſwar, and that all
" things are conceived by the junction of
" the ſexes. But theſe loſt ſouls having
" fixed on this viſion, are hypocrites,
" overwhelmed with madneſs and intoxi-
" cation. Becauſe of their folly, they adopt
" falſe doctrines; they abide by their in-
" conceivable opinion, and determine in
" their minds, that the gratification of the
" ſenſual appetites is ſupreme happineſs.
" Confounded with various thoughts and
" deſigns, and being firmly attached to
" their luſts, they ſink at laſt into the
" Narak of impurity. Wherefore I caſt
" down thoſe evil ſpirits, who thus deſpiſe
" me; and being doomed to the wombs of

" Aſoors* from birth to birth, and not " finding me, they go into the infernal " regions."

It has been aſſerted by ſome writers, that the Hindoos believe in predeſtination; and there are ſeveral circumſtances, as well as paſſages in ſome of their authors, which ſeem to give weight to that opinion. But, upon farther inquiry, it appears, that it is contrary to the principles of their religion; and wherever this belief has obtained, it ſhould be conſidered as the private notion of individuals, unwarranted by the eſtabliſhed doctrines.

The philoſopher and Brahman, Viſhnou-Sarma, ſays in the Heetopades: " It has " been ſaid, that the determined fate of all " things inevitably happeneth; and that " whatever is decreed muſt come to paſs. " But ſuch are the idle ſentiments of certain " men. Whilſt a man confideth in Pro- " vidence, he ſhould not ſlacken his own

---

* Demons, or evil ſpirits.

" endea-

" endeavours; for without labour he can-
" not obtain oil from the ſeed.

" They are weak men who declare fate
" to be the ſole cauſe.

" It is ſaid, that fate is nothing but the
" conſequence of deeds committed in a
" former ſtate of exiſtence; wherefore it
" behoveth a man diligently to exert the
" powers he is poſſeſſed of*.

" As the potter formeth the lump of clay
" into whatever ſhape he liketh, even ſo
" may a man regulate his own actions.

" Good fortune is the offspring of our
" endeavours, although there be nothing
" ſweeter than eaſe.

" The boy who hath been exerciſed un-
" der the care of his parents, may attain the
" ſtate of an accompliſhed man; but no

* Mr. Wilkins obſerves, that many of the Hindoos believe this world to be a ſtate of rewards and puniſhments, as well as of probation; that good and bad fortune are the effects of good or evil actions committed in a former ſtate, and to prevent unhappineſs in a future life, " it behoveth a man," &c.

" one is a pundit in the ſtate he came from " his mother's womb."

Some of their philoſophers inſiſt, that God created all things perfectly good; that man, being a free agent, may be guilty of moral evil, but that this in no way proceeds from or affects the ſyſtem of nature; that he is to be reſtrained from doing injury to others, by the rules eſtabliſhed for the preſervation of order in ſociety; and that the pain and ills which invariably reſult from wicked actions, will alone be a never-failing puniſhment; as the happineſs which a man receives from doing good, ſurpaſſes every other human bleſſing.

SKETCH XI.

Aſtronomy of the Brahmans.

THE Brahmans are in poſſeſſion of ancient aſtronomical tables, from which they annually compoſe almanacks, and foretell eclipſes, although they are, I believe, unacquainted with the principles upon which their anceſtors conſtructed them. Various predictions, founded upon their aſtrology, help to fill up theſe almanacks; ſome days are marked as lucky, and others as unlucky; and they likewiſe pretend to tell fortunes by means of horoſcopes.

In their arithmetical calculations they are remarkably exact, and are perfectly well acquainted with the uſe of decimal fractions. They ſeem to have known the uſe of the

gnomon at a very remote period; and at Benares, and other places, many ancient dials, of a very curious conſtruction and nice workmanſhip, are yet to be met with.

Their religion commands, that the four ſides of their temples ſhould front the cardinal points, and they are all ſo conſtructed. Monſieur le Gentil obſerves:

"Le gnomon ſert aux Brames, a trouver "la ligne meridienne, a orienter leur pa- "godes, et a trouver combien la longueur "d'un jour quelconque de l'annee pris hors "des equinoxes, excede la durée du jour "de l'equinoxe, ou eſt plus petit que ce "meme jour.

"L'uſage du gnomon chez eux remonte "a une tres grande antiquite, s'ils s'en "ſont toujours ſervis, pour orienter leurs "pagodes, comme il y a lieu à le pre- "ſumer*."

* Voyage dans les Mers de l'Inde, par M. le Gentil.

They

They reckon the ſolar year, civil time, at three hundred and ſixty-five days; but in their aſtronomical tables it is computed at three hundred and ſixty-five days ſix hours twelve minutes and thirty ſeconds.

By Europeans it is now computed at three hundred and ſixty-five days five hours forty-eight minutes and fifty-five ſeconds. It was reckoned by Hipparchus, about 1940 years ago, at three hundred and ſixty-five days five hours fifty-five minutes and twelve ſeconds; and as above obſerved, when the aſtronomical tables of the Brahmans were conſtructed, at three hundred and ſixty-five days ſix hours twelve minutes and thirty ſeconds. Hence it would appear, that there is a gradual decreaſe in the length of the year; and if theſe calculations can be relied upon, we muſt conclude, that the earth approaches the ſun; that its revolution is thereby ſhortened, and that the tables of the Brahmans, or the obſervations that fixed the

length of their year, muſt have been made near 7300 years ago. The duration given to the year by Hipparchus, was confirmed by Ptolemy, who ſucceeded him; and the difference between our calculations and thoſe of Hipparchus and Ptolemy, in ſome ſort eſtabliſh the accuracy of thoſe of the Brahmans.

Monſieur le Gentil, and Monſieur Bailly * have endeavoured to adjuſt the aſtronomical time of the Brahmans to that of the Europeans. Monſieur le Gentil ſays:

"C'eſt ce que nous pouvons appeller "l'année ſyderale des Brames; mais parce "que les etoiles avancent ſelon eux, de "54 ſecondes tous les ans d'occident en "orient, on trouve (en ſuppoſant encore "avec eux le mouvement journalier du "ſoleil d'un degré) qu'il faut oter 21′, 36″ "pour avoir ce que nous appellons l'année

* Traité de l' Aſtronomie Indienne et Orientale, par Monſieur Bailly, publiſhed in 1787.

" tropique, ou equinoxiale de 365^{d}, $5'$, " $50''$, $54'''$.

" Cette determination eſt de deux * mi- " nutes ſeulement plus grande que celle que " les aſtronomes admettent aujourdhui pour " la longeur de l'année; mais elle eſt plus " petite de $4' \frac{1}{2}$ † ou environ, que celle de " Hipparque adoptée par Ptolemée, qui " ſuppoſit l'année beaucoup trop longue. " Par conſequent, les anciens Brames con- " noiſſoient la longeur de l'année ſolaire " beaucoup mieux que ne l'ont connue " Hipparque et Ptolemée."

But, according to Monſieur le Gentil's explanation, there would ſtill remain a difference between the time given to the year by the Brahmans, and the modern aſtronomers, of 1 minute and 59 ſeconds; and ſuch being the caſe, I cannot ſee any good reaſon for admitting this explanation and condemning Hipparchus; the more

---

* 1. 59. † 4' 10.

eſpecially

eſpecially as his correctneſs with reſpect to the lunar period is generally allowed.

The Hindoos reckon from the riſing to the next riſing ſun, ſixty naſigey; each naſigey is divided into ſixty veinary, and each veinary into ſixty taipary: 2 ½ naſigey are therefore equal to one of our hours; 2 ½ veinary to one of our minutes; and 2 ½ taipary, to one of our ſeconds; and the aſtronomical year of the Brahmans, which is ſaid to conſiſt of

N.	V.	T.	
365,	15,	31,	15, anſwers to
H.	M.	Sec.	
365,	6,	12,	30.

They allot four Yamams, or watches, to the day, and four to the night.

Their week conſiſts as ours, of ſeven days, and to each of theſe they have given the name of one of their planets.

Sunday	is	Additavaram	{ or the day of the }	Sun
Monday	—	Somavaram	-	Moon
				Tueſday

Tueſday	is	Maugalavaram	or the day of	Mars
Wedneſday	—	Boutavaram	-	Mercury
Thurſday	—	Brahaſpativaram	-	Jupiter
Friday	—	Soucravaram	-	Venus
Saturday	—	Sanyvaram	-	Saturn.

But their planets, like their gods, are frequently called by different names.

The year of the Hindoos begins on the 11th day of our month of April. They divide it into two equal parts; the one compriſing the time the ſun is to the ſouth, the other to the north of the equator; and they celebrate his return to the north by an annual equinoctial feaſt.

To adjuſt the aſtronomical with the civil time, every fourth year is a leap year; in which the time exceeding the 365 days is thrown into one of the 12 months. The number of days in the month is unequal; and ſome are of opinion, that in eſtabliſhing the duration of each, attention has been paid to the time required by the ſun to

paſs

paſs through the different ſigns of the Zodiac *.

In their tables they are put down in the following order.

	Days.	Nas.	Vei.	Tai.
Sitterey, begining the 11th of April,	30	55	32	0
Vayaſey - beginning in May	31	24	12	0
Any - in June	31	36	38	0
Ady - - in July	31	28	12	0
Avany - - in Auguſt	31	2	10	0
Pivataſſy - in Sept.	30	27	22	0
Arbaſſy - in Oct.	29	54	7	0
Cartigey - - in Nov.	29	30	24	0
Margaii - in Dec.	29	20	53	0
Tay - - in Jan.	29	27	16	0
Maſey - - in Feb.	29	48	24	0
Pangouney - in March	30	20	21	15
	365	15	31	15

In

* Ces mois n'ont pas tous la même durée, le mois de Juin eſt le plus long de tous, et le mois de Decembre le plus court. Cette difference ſuppoſe que les aſtronomes qui les premiers ont travaillé à cette methode Indienne ont connu l'apogée et le perigée du ſoleil; c'eſt à dire qu'ils ont remarqué que le ſoleil retardoit ſon mouvement dans le mois de Juin, et qu'il l'acceleroit pendant le mois de Decembre; qu'il employoit

In their common time they are reckoned as follows:

Bayſatch,	beginning the	11th of	April, has	31 Days
Taith,	-	-	-	31
Aſadeh,	-	-	-	32
Sanvon,	-	-	-	31
Bhadon,	-	-	-	31
Aſan,	-	-	-	31
Catuk,	-	-	-	30
Aghou,	-	-	-	30
Pous,	-	-	-	29
Magh,	-	-	-	29
Phagon,	-	-	-	30
Tehait,	-	-	-	30
			Days	365 *

The lunar month is reckoned from the full moon, and is divided into two parts;

---

employoit par conſequent plus de temps à parcourir le ſigne des Gemeaux que celui du Sagittaire. La longeur des autres mois eſt comme le temps que le ſoleil met à parcourir les autres ſignes du zodiaque.

Voy. dans les Mers de l'Inde.

* In the manner of writing the names of the months for the aſtronomical time, I have followed Monſieur le Gentil, and for the common time Colonel Polier. But it muſt be remembered, that names are differently pronounced in different parts of India.

that

that from the full moon to the change is called Bole, or waning; and that from the new to the full moon, Sood, or increaſing.

They reckon the duration of the world by four Yougs, correſponding in their nature with the golden, ſilver, brazen, and iron ages of the ancients. But in the length aſcribed to theſe, they are extravagant; and notwithſtanding the endeavours of ſome ingenious men of ſcience, to adjuſt their chronology to that of other nations, we do not find, that it has yet been done in a manner by any means ſatisfactory.

	YEARS.
The firſt, or the Sutty Youg, is ſaid to have laſted - -	3,200,000
The Tirtah Youg, or ſecond age -	2,400,000
The Dwapaar Youg, or third age -	1,600,000
And they pretend the Kaly Youg, or preſent age, will laſt - -	400,000

They tell us, that in the firſt ages men were greatly ſuperior to the preſent race, both in the length of their lives, and in the powers

powers of their bodies and mental faculties; but that, in conſequence of vice, they degenerated to what we now ſee them.

They ſpeak of an author, named Munnou, ſaid to have flouriſhed in the Sutty Youg, or firſt age; and the works of another, Jage Bulk, who is ſuppoſed to have lived in the Tirtah, or ſecond age, are ſaid to be ſtill extant, and to contain many of the Hindoo laws and cuſtoms. That theſe authors are of great antiquity, we may allow; but the wild date given to their works by the Brahmans, inſtead of increaſing our reſpect for them, makes us ſmile at their credulity. Or when we conſider their uſual ingenuity, it leads us to imagine, that, like the ancient prieſts of Egypt, they have induſtriouſly wrapped up the origin of their ſpiritual authority in ſo much myſtery, and thrown it back to ſo remote a period, with a view to ſhut out inveſtigation, and render inquiry fruitleſs. We ſhall therefore abandon thoſe fabulous

accounts

accounts to ſuch as may chooſe to amuſe themſelves with conjectures, and proceed to dates that ſeem to be ſupported by ſcience and hiſtory.

The beginning of the Kaly Youg, or preſent age, is reckoned from two hours twenty-ſeven minutes and thirty ſeconds of the morning of the 16th of February, three thouſand one hundred and two years before the Chriſtian æra; but the time for which their aſtronomical tables are conſtructed, is two days three hours thirty-two minutes and thirty ſeconds after that, or the 18th February, about ſix in the morning. They ſay, that there was then a conjunction of the planets; and their tables ſhew that conjunction. Monſieur Bailly obſerves*, that, by calculation, it appears that Jupiter and Mercury were then in the ſame degree of the ecliptic; that Mars was diſtant about eight degrees, and Saturn

* Traité de l'Aſtronomie Indienne et Orientale, par Monſieur Bailly, publiſhed in 1787.

ſeven-

ſeventeen; and it reſults from thence, that at the time of the date given by the Brahmans to the commencement of the Kaly Youg, they ſaw thoſe four planets ſucceſſively diſengage themſelves from the rays of the ſun; firſt Saturn, then Mars, then Jupiter, and then Mercury. Theſe four planets, therefore, ſhewed themſelves in conjunction, and though Venus could not have appeared, yet as they only ſpeak in general terms, it was natural enough to ſay, there was then a conjunction of the planets. The account given by the Brahmans is confirmed by the teſtimony of our European tables, which prove it to be the reſult of a true obſervation. Monſieur Bailly is of opinion, that their aſtronomical time is dated from an eclipſe of the moon, which appears then to have happened, and that the conjunction of the planets is only mentioned by the way. The cauſe of the date given to their civil time he does not explain, but ſuppoſes it to be ſome memor-

able occurrence that we are unacquainted with. We are by ſome told, that the circumſtance which marked that epoch, was the death of their hero Kriſhna, who, as we have already obſerved, was ſuppoſed to be the god Viſhnou in one of his incarnations. Others ſay, it was the death of a famous and beloved ſovereign, Rajah Judiſhter. But whichever of the two it may be, the Hindoos, conſidering the event as a great calamity, diſtinguiſhed it by beginning a new age, and expreſſed their feelings by its name, the Kaly Youg, the age of unhappineſs or misfortune.

But beſides the Kaly Youg, we are acquainted with two other epochs, from which the Hindoos reckon their civil time in different places. The one commences from the year of the inauguration of a prince named Bickermajit, which happened in the year of the Kaly Youg 3044; and the other from the death of a prince, third in ſucceſſion from him, called Salbaham, who

ſeems

ſeems to be the Salivaganam of Monſieur le Gentil. The reign of Bickermajit was diſtinguiſhed by the ſtrict adminiſtration of juſtice, and the encouragement given by him to men of learning. The poet and philoſopher Kaldoſs was particularly protected by him. By that prince's deſire he is ſaid to have made a collection of the different parts of the Ramayan *, which was diſperſed in detached pieces; and he was conſidered as the chief of fourteen learned Brahmans, whom Bickermajit invited to his court from different parts of the empire, and diſtinguiſhed with the appellation of the fourteen jewels of his crown.

Monſieur Bailly informs us, that Monſieur de la Loubére, who was ſent ambaſſador from Louis XIV. to Siam, brought home from thence tables and rules for the calculation of eclipſes; that he found in the place, where the charts belonging to the

* A celebrated Epic Poem.

navy are kept, two manuſcripts containing Hindoo aſtronomical tables, that were depoſited there by the late Monſieur de Liſle, one of which had been given to Monſieur de Liſle by Father Patouillet, correſpondent of the miſſionaries in India, and the other ſent to him from India by the Pere des Champs; and that beſides theſe, Monſieur le Gentil brought home in 1772 other tables and precepts of aſtronomy.

He obſerves, that though all theſe tables were formed for different places, it evidently appears that they all came from the ſame original; all have the ſame motion of the ſun, the ſame duration of the year, and all are conſtructed to the ſame meridian, which paſſes near to Benares: as, for inſtance, the tables brought from Siam ſuppoſe a reduction of one hour and thirteen minutes of time, or eighteen degrees and fifteen minutes of weſt longitude, from the part of Siam for which they are adjuſted.

Monſieur

Monſieur le Gentil mentions that the method deſcribed in the tables which he brought home is called *Fakiam*, or the new, to diſtinguiſh it from another eſtabliſhed at Benares, called *Siddantam*, or the ancient. The Pere des Champs alſo ſays, that the Hindoos have a method called Souria Siddantam, which has ſerved as a rule for the conſtruction of all the tables now exiſting, and is ſuppoſed to be the original and primitive aſtronomy of the Brahmans.

Monſieur Bailly, in treating of theſe tables, makes the following obſervations: "Le mouvement Indien dans ce long in-"tervalle, de 4383 ans, ne differt pas "d'une minute de celui de Caſſini; il eſt "egalement conformé a celui des tables de "Maier. Ainſi deux peuples, les Indiens "et les Européens, placés aux deux extré-"mités du monde, et par des inſtitutions "peut-etre auſſi eloignées dans le tems, "ont obtenu préciſement les mêmes ré-"ſultats, quant au mouvement de la lune,

" et une conformité qui ne ſeroit pas con-
" cevable, ſi elle n'etoit pas fondée ſur
" l'obſervation, et ſur une imitation réci-
" proque de la nature. Remarquons, que
" les quatres tables des Indiens ſont toutes
" les copies d'une même aſtronomie. On
" ne peut nier que les tables de Siam, n'ex-
" iſtaſſent en 1687, dans le tems que Mon-
" ſieur de la Loubére les rapporta de Siam.
" A cette époque les tables de Caſſini et de
" Maier n'exiſtoient pas; les Indiens avoient
" deja le mouvement exact que renferment
" ces tables, et nous ne l'avions pas encore.
" Il faut donc convenir que l'exactitude de
" ce mouvement Indien eſt le fruit de l'ob-
" ſervation. Il eſt exact dans cette durée
" de 4383 ans, parce qu'il a été pris ſur le
" ciel même; et ſi l'obſervation en a dé-
" terminé la fin, elle en a marqué egale-
" ment le commencement. C'eſt le plus
" long intervalle qui ait été obſervé et dont
" le ſouvenir ſe ſoit conſervé dans les faſtes
" de l'aſtronomie. Il a ſon origine dans
" l'époque de 3102 ans avant J. C. et il eſt
" une

" une preuve démonſtrative de la realité de " cette époque *."

Monſieur Bailly ſays, that the Hindoo tables give an annual inequality to the moon, ſuch as was diſcovered by Tycho Brahé, which he obſerves was unknown to the Alexandrian ſchool, and to the Arabs who ſucceeded it.

The Zodiac, or Sodi-Mandalam, is divided into twelve parts or ſigns, each of which has its particular name.

Each ſign contains thirty degrees; but the Hindoos alſo divide the twelve ſigns into twenty-ſeven parts, which they call *conſtellations*, or *places of the moon reckoned in the twelve ſigns*; every ſign is equal to two conſtellations and a quarter, each conſtellation conſiſts of thirteen degrees twenty

* See " Le Diſcours preliminaire du Traité de " l'Aſtronomie Indienne et Orientale." Monſieur Bailly, in a note to pages 36 and 37, ſhews that they could not have received any inſtruction from any aſtronomer who preceded Caſſini, as all, except him, differ from them very conſiderably.

minutes, and each has its particular name *.

The preceſſion of the equinoxes is reckoned in their ancient tables at fifty-four ſeconds in the year: and as the motion of the ſtars from weſt to eaſt is found to be at preſent only about fifty ſeconds in the year;

---

* "Ces 27 conſtellations ſont en effet marquées dans "le ciel par des etoiles. J'emportai avec moi le nom "de chaque conſtellation en particulier, et le nombre "des etoiles qu'il renferme; mais je ne peux pas "aſſurer les avoir bien reconnues, parceque beaucoup "de ces conſtellations ſortent du cours de notre zo-"diaque.

"Dans les regles de l'aſtronomie Indienne des "Siamois, que Dominique Caſſininous a données tome "viii. des Anciens Mémoires de l'Academie Royale "des Sciences, p. 234, 235, & 239, il eſt dit, que les "ſtations de la lune ſont les vingtſeptiémes parties du "zodiaque: les Siamois admettent donc vingt-ſept "conſtellations, comme les Indiens de la preſqu' iſle "en deça du Gange; mais il ne paroît pas que les "Siamois faſſent aucune attention aux etoiles, qui re-"pondent à ces vingtſeptiémes parties du zodiaque. "On ne trouve ces vingt-ſept conſtellations du zo-"diaque chez aucune autre nation Orientale; elles "ſont donc un ancien monument bien precieux pour "l'hiſtoire de l'aſtronomie." Voyage dans les Mers de l'Inde, par Monſieur le Gentil, de l'Academie des Sciences, p. 256, 257, &c.

if

if we could depend on the exactneſs of the ancient obſervations of the Brahmans, we muſt conclude, as Monſieur le Gentil obſerves, that the motion of the ſtars is growing ſlower. From this motion they have evidently formed many of their calculations. They have a cycle or period of ſixty years, each of which has its particular name; another of 3600 years, and one of 24,000. From the annual motion given by them to the ſtars, of 54 ſeconds of longitude in the year, 54 minutes of longitude make ſixty years, 54 degrees 3600, and the entire revolution of 360 degrees makes their great period of 24,000 years, which is often mentioned by them.

The rules of their aſtronomy are written in enigmas and in verſe; in verſe, perhaps, to facilitate the retention of them in the memory; and in enigmas, to render them unintelligible to all but thoſe who are regularly inſtructed, a privilege which is denied both to the Bhyſe and the Soodra.

Monſieur le Gentil obſerves, that the Brahmans in general make their calculations with a great degree of quickneſs. He gives an account of a viſit he received ſoon after his arrival at Pondicherry, from a Hindoo, named Nana Moodoo, who had found means, through the ſecret protection of perſons in power, to learn from a Brahman ſome of the principles of aſtronomy. Monſieur le Gentil, to try the extent of his knowledge in it, gave him ſome examples of eclipſes to calculate, and amongſt others, one of a total eclipſe of the moon, of the 23d December 1768. Seating himſelf on the floor, he began his work with a parcel of ſmall ſhells, named Cowries, which he employed to reckon with; and looking occaſionally at a book of palm leaves, that contained his rules, he gave the reſult of his calculation, with all the different places of the eclipſe, in leſs than three quarters of an hour, which, on confronting it with an Ephemeris, Monſieur le Gentil found ſufficiently

ficiently exact to excite his aſtoniſhment at the time and manner in which the calculation had been performed. Yet the education of Nana Moodoo, by his own account, muſt have been very confined; and Monſieur le Gentil takes notice, that he ſeemed entirely unacquainted with the meaning of many terms, being unable to explain them.

" Pour la facilitè de leurs operations " aſtronomiques, les Brames les ont miſes " en vers; chaque terme eſt un terme com- " poſé, et a beſoin d'explication pour etre " compris: par ce moyen les Brames ne ſont " entendus de perſonne, ou au moins ne " le ſont que de trés peu de monde.

" Le Brame, qui avoit enſeigné cet In- " dien, s'etoit donc reſervé le ſecret des " termes, de façon que celuici faiſoit " machinalement ſes calculs ſans les enten- " dre; il trouvoit des reſultats, et ne ſavoit " point ce qu'ils ſignifioient.

" Par

" Par example; dans les eclipſe de lune, " les Brames ont donne à l'argument de " latitude, le nom de Patona Chandara, " c'eſt à dire, la lune offenſée par le " dragon: Or, le probleme conſiſte à " trouver ce Patona Chandara; l'Indien en " quéſtion le trouvoit tres bien, mais il " n'entendoit point le mot Patona Chan- " dara, bien loin, qu'il ſut, que ce fut la " diſtance de la lune à ſon nœud, et ainſi " du reſte *."

If

---

* The Patona Chandara accounts for the vulgar idea among the Hindoos, that the eclipſes are occaſioned by a conteſt between the ſun, or the moon, and the great ſerpent.

Eclipſes are always obſerved with ſuperſtitious ceremonies. The following account is given by Bernier of thoſe he ſaw on the occaſion of an eclipſe of the ſun.

" Celle que je vis a Delhi moi ſembla auſſi tres " remarquable pour les ridicules erreurs et ſuperſti- " tions des Indiens. Au temps qu'elle devoit arriver " je montai ſur la terraſſe de ma maiſon, qui etoit " ſituée ſur le bord de Gemna. De là je vis les deux " côtés de ce fleuve près d'une lieue de long, couverts " de

If we are obliged to allow that the Hindoos were ſo far advanced in the ſcience of aſtronomy, as to make the obſervations, which

---

" de gentils, ou idolatres, qui etoient dans l'eau " juſqu'à la ceinture, regardant attentivement vers le " ciel, pour ſe plonger et ſe laver dans le moment " que l'eclipſe commenceroit. Les petits garçons et " les petites filles etoient tout nuds, comme la main. " Les hommes l'etoient auſſi, hormis qu'ils avoient " une eſpêce d'echarpe bridée à l'entour des cuiſſes " pour les couvrir; et les femmes mariées et les filles " qui ne paſſoient pas ſix ou ſept ans étoient couvertes " d'une ſimple drap. Les perſonnes de condition, " comme les rajahs, ou princes ſouverains gentils, " qui ſont ordinairement à la cour au ſervice et à la " paye du roi, et les ſerraſs, ou changeurs, banquiers, " jouillers, et autres gros marchands, avoient la plû- " part paſſé de l'autre côté de l'eau avec toute leur fa- " mille, et y avoient dreſſé leurs tentes, et planté dans " la riviere des Kanates, qui ſont une eſpece de par- " avent pour faire leurs ceremonies, et ſe laver à leur " aiſe avec leurs femmes, ſans être vus de perſonne. " Ces idolatres ne ſe furent pas plutot apperçus que " le ſoleil commençoit de s'eclipſer, que j'entendis " un grand cri qui s'eleva, et que tout d'un coup ils " ſe plongerent tous dans l'eau, je ne ſais combien de " fois de ſuite, ſe tenant par apres debout dans cette " eau, les yeux et les mains elevées vers le ſoleil, " marmotant tous et priant comme on diroit en grande " devotion,

which they appear to have made, at the beginning of the Kaly Youg, about four thouſand eight hundred and ninety years ago, we may fairly, and muſt indeed neceſſarily ſuppoſe many ages previous to that, in which a great and numerous nation might gradually proceed to that degree of

---

" devotion, prenant de temps en temps de l'eau avec " les mains, la jettant vers le ſoleil, s'inclinant la " tête profondement, remuant et tournant les bras et " les mains, tantôt d'une façon, et tantôt d'une autre, " et continuant ainſi leurs plongemens, leurs prieres, " et leurs ſingeries juſqu'à là fin de l'eclipſe, quand " chacun ſe retira en jettant des pieces d'argent bien " avant dans l'eau, et faiſant l'aumone aux Brames, " qui n'avoient pas manqué de ſe trouver à cette ce- " remonie. Je remarquai qu'au ſortir de cette ri- " viere ils prirent tous de vêtemens nouveaux, qui les " attendoient tout plier ſur le ſable, et que pluſieurs " des plus devots laiſſerent là leur anciens habits pour " les Brames. C'eſt ainſi, que de ma terraſſe je vis " celebrer cette grande fête de l'eclipſe, qui fût " chommée de la même façon dans l'Indus, dans le " Gange, et dans tous les autres fleuves et talabs, ou " reſervoirs des Indes; mais ſurtout dans celui de " Tanaiſer, ou il ſe trouva plus de cent et cinquante " mille perſonnes aſſemblées de tous les côtes des " Indes, parceque ſon eau eſt ce jour-là reputée plus " ſainte, et plus meritoire qu'aucune autre."

refine-

refinement and knowledge which the Hindoos ſeem to have enjoyed. But theſe reflections lead us ſo far back into the abyſs of time, that whilſt we are loſt in contemplating the paſt duration of our ſyſtem, we may be apt to forget the generally received opinions with reſpect to the creation of the world, and the hiſtory of mankind.

I ſhall conclude this ſhort ſketch of the aſtronomy of the Bramins with an extract of a letter from Sir Robert Barker to the Preſident of the Royal Society of London, read before the Society the 29th of May 1777, giving a deſcription of the obſervatory at Benares.

However much that ancient and celebrated ſeminary may have declined from its former ſplendour, he informs us, that there are ſtill many public foundations and temples, where ſome thouſands of Brahmans yet conſtantly reſide.

" Having

" Having frequently heard that the Bra-
" mins had a knowledge of aſtronomy,
" and being confirmed in this by their in-
" formation of an approaching eclipſe,
" both of the ſun and moon, I made in-
" quiry, when at that place in the year
" 1772, amongſt the principal Bramins, to
" endeavour to get ſome information rela-
" tive to the manner in which they were
" acquainted with approaching eclipſes ;
" but they gave me but little ſatisfaction.
" I was told that thoſe matters were con-
" fined to a few, who were in poſſeſſion of
" certain books and records, ſome contain-
" ing the myſteries of their religion, and
" others aſtronomical tables, written in the
" Sanſkrit language, which ſcarcely any
" but thoſe few underſtand; that they
" would, however, take me to a place
" which had been conſtructed for the pur-
" poſe of making obſervations, and from
" whence they ſuppoſed the learned Bra-
" mins

" mins made theirs. I was conducted to
" an ancient building of ſtone, the lower
" part of which, in its preſent ſtate, ſerved
" as a ſtable for horſes, and a receptacle
" for lumber, but by the number of courts
" and apartments, it appeared that it muſt
" once have been an edifice for the uſe
" of ſome public body. We entered this
" building, and went up a ſtair which led
" to a large terrace on the top of a part of
" it near to the river Ganges, where, to
" my ſurpriſe and ſatisfaction, I ſaw a
" number of inſtruments yet remaining in
" the greateſt preſervation, ſtupendouſly
" large, immovable from the ſpot, and con-
" ſtructed of ſtone, ſome of them being
" upwards of twenty feet in height. The
" execution in the conſtruction of theſe
" inſtruments exhibited a mathematical ex-
" actneſs in the fixing, bearing, and fitting,
" of the ſeveral parts. The ſituation of
" the two large quadrants of the inſtru-

" ments marked A*, whoſe radius is nine " feet two inches, by being at right angles " with a gnomon at 25 degrees elevation, " are thrown into ſuch an oblique ſitua- " tion, as to render them the moſt difficult, " not only to conſtruct of ſuch a magni- " tude, but to ſecure in their poſition, " and affords a ſtrong proof of the ability " of the architect; for by the ſhadow of " the gnomon thrown on the quadrants " they do not ſeem to have in the leaſt al- " tered from their original poſition; and " ſo true is the line of the gnomon, that, " by applying the eye to a ſmall iron ring " of an inch diameter at one end, the ſight " is carried through three others of the " ſame dimenſion to the extremity at the " other end, thirty eight feet eight inches " diſtant from it, without any obſtruc- " tion.

---

* See the Plate.

" Lieutenant

" Lieutenant Colonel Archibald Camp-
" bell, at that time chief engineer in the
" Eaſt India Company's ſervice at Bengal,
" a gentleman whoſe abilities do honour to
" his profeſſion, made a perſpective draw-
" ing of the whole of the apparatus that
" could be brought within his eye at one
" view; but I lament that he could not re-
" preſent ſome very large quadrants, whoſe
" radii were about twenty feet, they being
" on the ſide from whence he took his
" drawing. They are exact quarters of
" circles of different radii, the largeſt of
" which I judged to be twenty feet, con-
" ſtructed very exactly on the ſides of
" ſtone walls built perpendicular, and ſitu-
" ated, I ſuppoſe, in the meridian of the
" place; a braſs pin is fixed at the centre,
" or angle, of the quadrant, from whence,
" a Bramin informed me, they ſtretched a
" wire to the circumference when an ob-
" ſervation was to be made, from which

" it occurred to me, the obſerver muſt
" have moved his eye up or down the cir-
" cumference by means of a ladder, or
" ſome ſuch contrivance, to raiſe and lower
" himſelf until he had diſcovered the alti-
" tude of the heavenly bodies in their paſ-
" ſage over the meridian, ſo expreſſed on
" the arcs of thoſe quadrants; theſe arcs
" are very exactly divided into nine large
" ſections, each of which is again divided
" into ten, making ninety leſſer diviſions,
" or degrees, and theſe into twenty, ex-
" preſſing three minutes each, of about
" two tenths of an inch aſunder; ſo it is
" poſſible they had ſome method of again
" dividing theſe into more minute parts at
" the time of obſervation.

" My time would only permit me to
" take down the particular dimenſions of
" the moſt capital inſtrument, or the
" greater equinoctial ſun-dial, repreſented by
" figure A, (ſee the Plate) which appears to
" be

" be an inſtrument to expreſs ſolar time " by the ſhadow of a gnomon upon two " quadrants, one ſituated to the eaſt, and " the other to the weſt of it; and indeed " the chief part of their inſtruments at this " place appear to be conſtructed for the " ſame purpoſe, except the quadrants and " an inſtrument in braſs, that will be de- " ſcribed hereafter.

" Figure B is another inſtrument for de- " termining the exact hour of the day, by " the ſhadow of a gnomon, which ſtands " perpendicular to, and in the centre of, " a flat circular ſtone, ſupported in an " oblique ſituation by means of four up- " right ſtones and a croſs piece; ſo that " the ſhadow of the gnomon, which is a " perpendicular iron rod, is thrown upon " the diviſions of the circle deſcribed on " the face of the flat circular ſtone.

" Figure C is a braſs circle, about two " feet diameter, moving vertically upon

" two pivots between two ſtone pillars,
" having an index, or hand, turning round
" horizontally on the centre of this circle,
" which is divided into three hundred and
" ſixty parts; but there are no counter-
" diviſions on the index to ſubdivide thoſe
" on the circle. This inſtrument appears
" to be made for taking the angle of a
" ſtar at ſetting or riſing, or for taking the
" azimuth or amplitude of the ſun at ſet-
" ting or riſing.

" The uſe of the inſtrument, figure D,
" I was at a loſs to account for. It conſiſts
" of two circular walls, the outer of which
" is about forty feet diameter and eight
" high, the wall within about half that
" height, and appears intended as a place
" to ſtand on to obſerve the diviſions on
" the upper circle of the outer wall, rather
" than for any other purpoſe; and yet
" both circles are divided into three hun-
" dred and ſixty degrees, each degree being

" ſub-

" ſubdivided into twenty leſſer diviſions,
" the ſame as the quadrants. There is a
" door-way to paſs into the inner circle,
" and a pillar in the centre of that, of the
" ſame height with the lower circle, and
" having a hole in it which ſeems to be a
" ſocket for an iron rod to be placed per-
" pendicular. The diviſions on theſe circles,
" as well as on all the other inſtruments,
" will bear a nice examination with a pair
" of compaſſes.

" Figure E is a ſmall equinoctial ſun-
" dial, conſtructed on the ſame principle as
" the large one A."

Mr. Call, member of the Royal Society, and formerly chief engineer on the coaſt of Coromandel, in a letter to the Aſtronomer Royal, to be found in the Philoſophical Tranſactions of 1772, ſays, that he diſcovered the ſigns of the zodiac on the cieling of a choulterie at Verdapetah, in the province of Madura, near Cape Comorin;

that he found them on the cieling of a temple that ſtands in the middle of a tank, before the pagoda of Teppicolum; and that he had often met with ſeveral parts of the zodiac in detached pieces.

SKETCH XII.

Manners and Cuſtoms.

IT has been already obſerved, that the religion of Brimha inculcates marriage as a duty; and parents are ſtrictly enjoined to marry their children before the expiration of their eleventh year at lateſt. Polygamy is allowed, but ſeldom practiſed unleſs there be no proſpect of an heir by the firſt wife; and as it is an object of the firſt conſequence with the Hindoos to leave behind them a repreſentative, who may perform the uſual ceremonies for the repoſe of their ſouls, ſhould the marrying a ſecond wife, and their ſacrifices to Lingam *, prove ineffectual, they commonly

* See Sketch VIII. p. 168.

adopt

adopt a ſon from among their relations *.

The Hindoos are ſo ſcrupulous with reſpect to the virginity of their brides, that they marry extremely young, although the conſummation is deferred till the parties arrive at the age of puberty; nor will they marry a perſon with whom thoſe ſymptoms have already appeared to which the ſex is ſubject. Inſtances frequently occur of a man far advanced in life being married to a child of eight or ten years of age; and a widow cannot marry again, even if the huſband ſhould die before ſhe has attained an age proper to be admitted to his bed.

The Hindoo women are not entitled to any inheritance. If a man dies without male iſſue, his fortune deſcends to his adopted ſon; or if he has none, to his neareſt kinſman, who is obliged to main-

* See Sketch V. p. 116.

tain

tain the women that belonged to, and were maintained by the deceaſed. And if there ſhould even be no property, that duty falls upon thoſe who enjoy the right of inheritance.

The huſbands in general do not receive any dower with their wives. But on the contrary, when a girl is demanded of her father in marriage, and his conſent obtained, a preſent is made to him by the intended huſband, as a ſign that ſhe thenceforward belongs to him.

Many inſtances, however, occur of a rich man chuſing a poor relation to marry his daughter, when he is at the expence of the wedding, and receives him into his houſe, or gives him a portion of his fortune. In that caſe the bridegroom quits, with certain formalities, the family of his parents, and enters into, and becomes one of that of his father-in-law.

The marriage ceremonies are both tedious and expenſive. Although the match be

be previouſly agreed on by the parents, the father of the boy goes with much formality and demands the young woman for his ſon. The anſwer is returned with equal ceremony, and many preliminary forms being obſerved, the day of marriage is fixed. It is celebrated at the houſe of the bride. Beſides the uſual rooms for receiving viſitors, a large area is covered, and formed into a Pandal, or great temporary hall, which is lined with white linen, or chintz, and hung round and decorated with garlands of flowers. The bride and bridegroom are ſeated at one end of it, under a kind of canopy, with their faces to the eaſt. The bride is on the left hand of the bridegroom, and a certain number of Brahmans ſtand on each ſide of them. The relations and gueſts ſit round the room on the floor *, which is ſpread with new

* Chairs are unknown, but in the poſſeſſions of Europeans; and to have a ſeat elevated above the level of the floor, is a mark of great diſtinction and ſuperiority.

mats,

mats, covered with carpets, and theſe generally likewiſe covered with white linen.

A ſpot for performing the ſacrifice is marked out in the centre of the room, with flowers diſtributed on the floor in various figures. If thoſe who are to be married be of the Viſhnou-Bukht, the Brahman who preſides at the ceremony invokes Viſhnou and Letchiney to be propitious to them; or if they be followers of Sheevah, he calls upon Sheevah and Gowry. The altar is then lighted, and whilſt the Brahman reads paſſages from the ſacred writings, he occaſionally throws into the fire bits of ſandal wood, bezoin, ſugar, and other articles. Worſhip is performed to Bawaney, to Viſhnou, and to Sheevah, during which, at certain intervals pointed out by the Brahmans, the bridegroom riſes from his ſeat, and walks round the place of ſacrifice, attended by the bride. The principal Brahman then calls out to the father of the bride by his name, who going

up

up to his daughter, takes her by the hand, and joins it with that of the bridegroom: then invoking ſome of the gods, he calls on them to witneſs, that he gives his daughter to be the wife of ſuch a one, naming his ſon-in-law. The Brahman hereupon gives the taly, or gold ornament that married women wear round the neck, into the hand of the bridegroom, by whom it is tied round the neck of the bride; and ſhe is thenceforward his married wife. He then ſwears before the nuptial fire, that he will be careful of, and kind to her: and leading her up to one of thoſe ſtones that are uſed for grinding ſpices and other ingredients for ſome of their victuals, he places her hand on it, thereby implying the obligation ſhe has contracted of taking care of his houſehold concerns. A plate of dry rice being brought to the Brahman, he mixes it with ſaffron, and after having prayed to the gods, he throws a little on the ſhoulders of the bridegroom and bride.

Grand

Grand proceſſions are made through the town. The young married couple ſit in the ſame pallankeen, attended by their relations and friends, ſome in pallankeens, others on horſes and elephants; and ſo great is their vanity, that they frequently, at ſuch ceremonies, borrow or hire numbers of thoſe animals.

The rejoicings laſt ſeveral days. The evenings are ſpent in diſplaying fireworks and illuminations, and in ſeeing dancers, who accompany the dance by tunes ſuitable to the occaſion. The whole concludes with preſents to the Brahmans and principal gueſts, and alms to the poor. The preſents to the gueſts generally conſiſt in ſhawls, and pieces of muſlin, or other cloths.

The marriage ceremonies are of courſe more or leſs pompous, according to the rank and means of the parties. But all pride themſelves on being as ſumptuous as they can.

When the bride appears to have arrived at the age of puberty, various ceremonies are again uſed. The parents receive compliments of congratulation, and the marriage is conſummated.

When ſhe becomes pregnant; when ſhe paſſes the ſeventh month without accident; and when ſhe is delivered of her child; there are at each of thoſe epochs, ceremonies to be performed, and thankſgivings made to the gods.

On the tenth day after the birth of the child, the relations are aſſembled to aſſiſt at the ceremony of giving it a name. The Brahmans proceed to examine the planets; and if they be found unfavourable, the ceremony is deferred, and ſacrifices performed to avert misfortune. When a fit moment is diſcovered, they fill as many pots with water as there are planets, and perform a ſacrifice to their honour. They then ſprinkle the head of the child with water

water taken from the pots; a Brahman gives it ſuch a name as he may think the beſt adapted to the time and circumſtances; and the ceremony is concluded with prayers, preſents to the Brahmans, and alms to the poor.

It is the duty of all mothers to ſuckle their own children, nor can it be diſpenſed with, but in caſe of ſickneſs. When a boy arrives at a fit age to receive the ſtring, which all Hindoos of the firſt three caſts wear round their bodies, there are freſh ceremonies performed, and preſents given to the Brahmans.

The uſual education of the boys conſiſts in teaching them to read and write. There are ſchools in all the towns and principal villages. The maſters are Brahmans. The place where the boys are taught, is generally a pandal, or room made of beams and leaves of the palm tree. The boys ſit on mats on the floor. The books are of

leaves, as already deſcribed *. Thoſe who write, hold in the left hand the book, and in the other a ſteel bodkin, with which they make a ſlight impreſſion on the leaf. But they frequently begin by making letters and figures with their finger, in ſand ſpread on the floor, and ſometimes learn to calculate with ſmall ſhells † and pebbles. Thoſe of the Khatry or Rajah caſt may be inſtructed in the ſciences.

As all the different profeſſions amongſt the Hindoos form as many claſſes or tribes, every one learns at home the profeſſion he belongs to, nor can he quit it for any other ‡.

The girls receive their inſtruction under the eye of their parents, which ſeldom con-

---

* See the note, page 151.

† See page 334.

‡ Haudquaquam licet unius ordinis virum alterius uxorem deducere, neque exercitium mutare; neque enim fas eſt militem agrum colere, nec philoſophari artificem. *Dio. Sic.* lib. ii. cap. 10.

ſiſts

ſiſts in any thing but the duties preſcribed to them by their religion.

While women are under thoſe monthly viſitations that are peculiar to their ſex, they quit their huſbands' bed, and retire to a ſeparate apartment; nor do they even eat in ſociety, until they have bathed and purified themſelves.

The practice of burning the dead is almoſt univerſal; and that of the widow burning herſelf on the funeral pile with the body of her deceaſed huſband, ſtill exiſts. It ſeems to have been the intention of the Mahomedan government to diſcourage a practice ſo ſhocking to humanity; but the governors of the provinces are accuſed of having turned the prejudice of the Hindoos to their own advantage, by conniving at it for a ſum of money. It at preſent prevails moſt in the Maharatta dominions, and in the countries of the ancient Rajahs, where inſtances of the kind are frequently to be met with,

particularly in families of high diſtinction. In the territories belonging to the Engliſh, they have every where oppoſed it; and it rarely happens, unleſs it be done ſecretly, or before thoſe, who may have authority to prevent it, can be ſufficiently apprized. The law rather commends than commands it, as it only ſays: "It is *proper* for a "woman to burn herſelf with her huſ- "band's corpſe;" — and future bleſſings are promiſed as a reward for doing ſo. But in caſe the widow ſhould prefer to live, ſhe is enjoined to obſerve inviolable chaſtity, to cut off her hair, and not to wear jewels or any other ornament. There are nevertheleſs ſome particular caſes in which it is even forbidden. A woman is not to burn herſelf, if ſhe be with child; or if her huſband died at a diſtance from her, unleſs ſhe can procure his girdle and turban to be placed on the funeral pile. The intention of ſo barbarous a practice is ſufficiently evident; and in all Oriental countries,

tries, the ſuperiority and ſecurity of the huſband, and the preſervation of his domeſtic authority, ſeems to have been a main object with legiſlators.

Such is the influence of cuſtom, and the ſenſe of ſhame, that a woman of the higheſt birth, brought up with the cares and delicacy ſuitable to her rank, and poſſeſſing that timidity and gentleneſs of manners natural to her ſex, and more eſpecially in that country, will undergo this awful ſacrifice with as much fortitude and compoſure as ever were exhibited by any hero or philoſopher of antiquity.

I never was preſent at ſuch a ceremony, but a perſon of my acquaintance, who happened to ſee one, gave me the following deſcription of it:

"A funeral pile being erected on a piece "of ground that was conſecrated to the "purpoſe, the body of the Rajah was "brought from the fort, accompanied by "many Brahmans, and others, and fol-

" lowed by the widow attended by rela-
" tions of both ſexes. Being arrived at
" the funeral pile, the body was placed on
" it, and certain ceremonies being per-
" formed, the widow took leave of her
" relations. She embraced thoſe of her
" own ſex; took off ſome jewels that ſhe
" wore, and diſtributed them amongſt
" them, as the laſt tokens of her affection.
" The women appeared to be greatly af-
" flicted; ſome ſilently weeping, and
" others making exceſſive lamentations.
" But ſhe was perfectly compoſed, ſmiled,
" and endeavoured to comfort them. She
" then advanced to the pile, and in a ſolemn
" manner walked round it. She ſtopped;
" and after contemplating the corpſe,
" touched the feet with her hand, raiſing it
" to her forehead, and inclining her body
" forwards. She then ſaluted the ſpec-
" tators in the ſame manner; and with
" the aſſiſtance of the Brahmans mounted
" the pile, and ſeated herſelf by the ſide

" of

" of the corpſe. Some who ſtood near her " with torches in their hands, ſet fire to it, " and, as it was compoſed of dry wood, " ſtraw, and other ſuch combuſtible ma- " terials, it was inſtantly in a flame. The " ſmoke was at firſt ſo great, that I imagine " this unfortunate young victim muſt have " been immediately ſuffocated, which, I " own, afforded me a ſort of melancholy " comfort, from the idea that her ſuffer- " ings would ſoon be ended."

Mr. Holwell gives a very particular account of a ceremony of the ſame kind, which I ſhall inſert from his Mythology and Coſmogony of the Gentoos *:

" At five of the clock in the morning of " the 4th of February 1742-3, died " Rhaam Chund Pundit, of the Maharatta " tribe, aged twenty-eight years. His " widow (for he had but one wife), aged " between ſeventeen and eighteen, as ſoon

* Or Hindoos.

" as he expired, disdaining to wait the
" term allowed her for reflection, imme-
" diately declared to the Brahmans and
" witnesses present her resolution to burn.
" As the family was of no small consider-
" ation, all the merchants of Cossimbuzaar,
" and her relations, left no arguments un-
" essayed to dissuade her from it.—Lady
" Russel, with the tendereſt humanity,
" sent her several messages to the same pur-
" pose;—the infant state of her children
" (two girls and a boy, the eldest not four
" years of age), and the terrors and pain of
" the death she sought, were painted to her
" in the strongest and most lively colouring;
" —she was deaf to all,—she gratefully
" thanked Lady Russel, and sent her word
" she had now nothing to live for, but re-
" commended her children to her protec-
" tion. When the torments of burning
" were urged *in terrorem* to her, she, with
" a resolved and calm countenance, put
" her finger into the fire, and held it there

" a con-

" a conſiderable time; ſhe then, with one " hand, put fire in the palm of the other, " ſprinkled incenſe on it, and fumigated " the Brahmans. The conſideration of her " children left deſtitute of a parent was " again urged to her.—She replied, *He that* " *made them, will take care of them.* She " was at laſt given to underſtand, ſhe " ſhould not be permitted to burn; this, " for a ſhort ſpace, ſeemed to give her " deep affliction, but ſoon recollecting her- " ſelf, ſhe told them, death was in her " power, and that if ſhe was not allowed " to burn, according to the principles of " her caſt, ſhe would ſtarve herſelf. Her " friends, finding her thus peremptory and " reſolved, were obliged at laſt to aſſent.

" The body of the deceaſed was carried " down to the water-ſide, early the follow- " ing morning; the widow followed " about ten o'clock, accompanied by three " very principal Brahmans, her children,

" parents,

" parents, and relations, and a numerous " concourſe of people.

" The order of leave for her burning " did not arrive from Hoſſeyn Khan, " Fouzdaar of Morſhadabad, until after " one, and it was then brought by one " of the Soubah's own officers, who had " orders to ſee that ſhe burnt voluntarily. " The time they waited for the order was " employed in praying with the Brahmans, " and waſhing in the Ganges; as ſoon as " it arrived, ſhe retired and ſtayed for the " ſpace of half an hour in the midſt of her " female relations, amongſt whom was her " mother; ſhe then diveſted herſelf of her " bracelets and other ornaments, and tied " them in a cloth, which hung like an " apron before her, and was conducted by " her female relations to one corner of the " pile. On the pile was an arched arbor " formed of dry ſticks, boughs and leaves, " open only at one end to admit her en-

" trance;

" trance; in this the body of the deceaſed
" was depoſited, his head at the end op-
" poſite to the opening. At the corner of
" the pile to which ſhe had been conduct-
" ed, the Brahmans had made a ſmall fire,
" around which ſhe and the three Brah-
" mans ſat for ſome minutes; one of them
" gave into her hand a leaf of the bale tree
" (the wood commonly conſecrated to
" form part of the funeral pile) with ſun-
" dry things on it, which ſhe threw into
" the fire; one of the others gave her a
" ſecond leaf, which ſhe held over the
" flame, whilſt he dropped three times
" ſome ghee * on it, which melted, and
" fell into the fire (theſe two operations
" were preparatory ſymbols of her ap-
" proaching diſſolution by fire); and
" whilſt they were performing this, the
" third Brahman read to her ſome portions
" of the Aughtorrah Bhade †, and aſked

* A kind of butter See page 112.

† *Ved.* See Sketch V. page 108.

" her

" her ſome queſtions, to which ſhe an-
" ſwered with a ſteady and ſerene coun-
" tenance; but the noiſe was ſo great we
" could not underſtand what ſhe ſaid, al-
" though we were within a yard of her.
" Theſe over, ſhe was led with great
" ſolemnity three times round the pile, the
" Brahmans reading before her; when ſhe
" came the third time to the ſmall fire, ſhe
" ſtopped, took her rings off her toes and
" fingers, and put them to her other or-
" naments; here ſhe took a ſolemn
" majeſtic leave of her children, parents,
" and relations; after which, one of the
" Brahmans dipped a large wick of cotton
" in ſome ghee, and gave it ready lighted
" into her hand, and led her to the open
" ſide of the arbor; there all the Brah-
" mans fell at her feet. After ſhe had
" bleſſed them, they retired weeping. By
" two ſteps ſhe aſcended the pile, and en-
" tered the arbor; on her entrance ſhe
" made a profound reverence at the feet

" of

" of the deceaſed, and advanced and ſeated " herſelf by his head; ſhe looked, in ſilent " meditation, on his face, for the ſpace " of a minute, then ſet fire to the arbor " in three places; obſerving that ſhe " had ſet fire to leeward, and that the " flames blew from her, ſhe roſe and ſet " fire to windward, and reſumed her ſta- " tion. Enſign Daniel with his cane ſepa- " rated the graſs and leaves on the wind- " ward ſide, by which means we had a " diſtinct view of her as ſhe ſat. With " what a dignity and undaunted counte- " nance ſhe ſet fire to the pile the laſt " time, and aſſumed her ſeat, can only be " conceived, for words cannot convey a " juſt idea of her. The pile being of com- " buſtible matters, the ſupporters of the " roof were preſently conſumed, and it " tumbled upon her."

Bernier, amongſt other inſtances of ſimilar ſacrifices, gives the following very remarkable one:

" Dans

" Dans le tems que je paſſai de la ville
" d'Amedaba à Agra par deſſus les terres
" des Rajas qui ſont dans ces quartiers là,
" on nous donna nouvelles dans une bour-
" gade, ou ſe repoſoit la caravane à l'om-
" bre en attendant la fraicheur de ſoir pour
" partir, qu'une femme s'en alloit à l'heure
" même ſe bruler avec le corps de ſon mari.
" Je me levai incontinent et m'en allai tout
" courant ſur le bord d'un grand reſervoir
" d'eau où ſe devoit faire l'action. Je vis
" en bas dans ce reſervoir, qui etoit preſque
" à ſec, une grande foſſe pleine de bois,
" un corps mort étendu deſſus, une femme,
" qui de loin me parût aſſez bien faite,
" aſſiſe ſur ce meme bucher, quatre ou cinq
" Brahmens qui y mettoient le feu de tous
" cotès, cinq femmes de mediocre age et
" aſſez bien vetues qui ſe tenoient par la
" main en chantant et en danſant à l'entour
" de la foſſe, et une grande foule de monde,
" d'hommes et de femmes qui regardoient.
" La bucher fut incontinent tout en feu,

" parce-

" parceque on avoit jette deſſus quantité
" d'huile et de beurre, et je vis dans ce tems
" au travers des flammes, que le feu ſe
" prenoit aux habits de la femme, qui
" etoient frottée d'huille de ſenteur melée
" avec de la poudre de ſantaus et du ſafran.
" Je vis tout cela, et ne remarquai point,
" que la femme s'inquietat et ſe tourmentat
" en aucune façon ; l'on diſoit même juſ-
" ques là qu'on lui avoit entendu prononcer
" avec beaucoup de force ces deux paroles,
" cinq, deux, pour donner à entendre,
" ſuivant certains ſentiments particuliers et
" populaires dans la Metempſicoſe, que
" c'etoit pour la cinquieme fois qu'elle ſe
" bruloit avec ſon meme mari, et qu'il n'en
" reſtoit plus que deux pour la perfection,
" comme ſi elle eut eu alors cette remi-
" niſcence ou quelque eſprit prophetique.
" Ce ne fut pas là la fin de cette infernale
" tragedie. Je croyois que ce n'etoit que
" par ceremonie que ces cinq femmes chan-
" toient et danſoient à l'entour de la foſſe ;
" mais

" mais je fus bien etonne lorſque la femme
" s'etant priſe aux habits d'une entr'elles,
" qu'elle ſe laiſſa aller la tete la premiere
" dans la foſſe, et qu'enſuite une autre ac-
" cablée de la flamme et de la fumée en fit
" autant que la premiere. Mon etonne-
" ment redoubler par apres quand je vis que
" les trois qui reſtoient ſe reprirent par la
" main, continuerent le brule ſans s'ef-
" frayer, et qu'enfin les unes apres les au-
" tres elles ſe precipiterent dans le feu,
" comme avoient fait leurs compagnes. Il
" m'ennuyoit bien de ce que je ne ſavois ce
" que cela vouloit dire, mais j'appris in-
" continent que c'etoient cinq eſclaves qui
" voyant que leur maitreſſe etoit extreme-
" ment affligée de la maladie de ſon mari,
" et qu'elles lui avoient promis de ne lui
" point ſurvivre, et de ſe bruler avec lui,
" ſe laiſſerent auſſi toucher de compaſſion,
" et de tendreſſe envers cette maitreſſe, et
" s'engagerent de parole de la ſuivre dans
" ſa reſolution, et de ſe bruler avec elle.

" Pluſieurs

" Pluſieurs perſonnes alors que je conſultois
" ſur ce brûlement des femmes avec le corps
" de leurs maris, me voulurent perſuader
" que ce qu'elles en faiſoient n'etoit que
" par amitie qu'elles avoient eu pour eux.
" Mais j'ai bien reconnu depuis, que ce
" n'etoit qu'un effet de l'opinion, de la
" prevention, de la coûtume, et que les
" meres, infatuées de leur jeuneſſe de cette
" ſuperſtition, comme d'une choſe très
" vertueuſe, tres louable, et inevitable à
" une femme d'honneur, en infatuoient de
" meme l'eſprit de leurs filles de leur tendre
" jeuneſſe, quoi qu' au fond ce n'ait jamais
" eté qu'un artifice des hommes, pour
" s'aſſujetir davantage leurs femmes."

Two Engliſh officers, who were in the ſervice of the Nabob of Arcot, being preſent at one of theſe ceremonies in the province of Tanjour, were ſo affected by it, that they drew their ſwords and reſcued the woman. But although ſhe was immediately reſtored to her relations, and it

clearly appeared that they had not uſed any kind of liberty with her, or had any other motive for what they did but the ſudden impulſe of humanity; the Brahmans poſitively rejected her ſolicitations for permiſſion to burn herſelf afterwards; ſaying ſhe was polluted, and had loſt the virtues of her caſt. To ſatisfy them for the inſult, the officers were put under an arreſt, and afterwards ſent to ſerve in a different part of the country.

A Rajah, in one of thoſe provinces that are under the dominion of the Engliſh, being dangerouſly ill, it was privately communicated to the perſon who commanded in the province, that his wife, in caſe of his death, intended to burn herſelf with the body of her huſband. The Rajah had an only child, a boy of about five years of age. The European commandant diſpatched a native of diſtinction, in whom he had confidence, with inſtructions, if the

the Rajah died, to repreſent to his widow the danger to which her ſon muſt be expoſed, if left to the doubtful care of ambitious relations, who had ever attempted to diſturb the peace of his father: that to live for his ſake would be yielding an unnatural and imaginary duty to one natural and important; and that by diſcharging the office of a tender and prudent mother, ſhe would beſt prove her affection and reſpect for the memory of the deceaſed. He was likewiſe deſired to ſignify to the Brahmans, that, ſhould they attempt to proceed to the ceremony, an officer, who commanded a neighbouring garriſon, had orders to prevent it. The fear of being inſulted by ſome public act of violence prevailed with the prieſts, and not the arguments; with which, on the contrary, they were highly offended, and even affected to treat them with much contempt. The Rajah died, and the widow, being a woman of ſenſe and merit, was afterwards of infinite uſe to

her ſon. Having thus a claim to the good offices as well as protection of the perſon, who it may be ſaid, had forced her to live, ſhe through his means enjoyed a degree of reſpect and conſideration, which, according to the cuſtoms of the country, ſhe muſt otherwiſe have loſt. She obtained from him ſeveral marks of indulgence for her ſon, and in one of her letters ſhe expreſſed herſelf to the following effect:

" When you ſhall recollect that I am his " mother, and that you prevailed on me to " diſhonour myſelf for his ſake, you will " ceaſe to be offended at my ſoliciting this " favour for him. You forced a duty on " me, which does not belong to our ſex *: " if I fail in the execution of it, I ſhall be " the reproach of all who are allied to me; " if I ſucceed, and this country flouriſh, " my offence may be forgotten:—my hap- " pineſs therefore depends on you; on

* Meaning the direction of his affairs.

" mine

" mine depends that of many:—conſider " this, and determine."

The Hindoos ſometimes erect a chapel on the ſpot where one of theſe ſacrifices has been performed; both on account of the ſoul of the deceaſed, and as a trophy of her virtue.

I remember to have ſeen one of theſe places, where the ſpot where the funeral pile had been erected was incloſed and covered with bamboos, formed into a kind of bower, planted with flowery creepers. The inſide was ſet round with flowers, and at one end there was an image.

The funeral ceremonies are always performed at night; the dead are never kept above a day, and the heat of the climate renders it neceſſary not to delay them. As ſoon as a perſon dies, advice is ſent to all the relations, and thoſe who live near enough repair to the houſe, to condole with the family, and attend the funeral. A Brahman preſides over the ceremony, and

all the kinſmen who are to aſſiſt at it ſhave and waſh themſelves. The Brahman, having likewiſe performed his ablutions, bleſſes and purifies the houſe, ſprinkling it with conſecrated water. The principal relation or mourner, addreſſing himſelf to the dead, calls out his name, and, with thoſe who aſſiſt, prays the gods to be favourable to him. The prayer being ended, they perform a kind of ſacrifice with a fire made of the ſacred graſs, koas, into which they throw incenſe and the aſhes of burnt cow-dung. The Brahman again repeats ſeveral prayers; after which the aſſiſtants waſh the body, rub it with the duſt of ſandal wood, paint on the forehead the mark of the caſt, and cover it with a clean robe. It is then placed on a palankeen, adorned with flowers; and, preceded by perſons with large trumpets, and tam-tams or ſmall drums, it is carried to the ground deſtined for the performance of the funeral rites. This is always at ſome diſtance from the towns.

The

The relations and friends follow it. When they arrive near to the funeral pile, they put down the corpſe, and perform a ſacrifice to the aerial ſpirits, or genii of the place, with rice and other grain. They examine the body to ſee if there be any ſigns of life, cut the nails, and ſhave the head. It is then placed on the pile, and one of the relations, having a torch given to him by a Brahman, ſets fire to it with his back turned towards the corpſe. The others aſſiſt in lighting it; ſome are employed in burning perfumes; and all make lamentations, accompanied by the tam-tams and other inſtruments. A ſacrifice is afterwards performed to the manes of the deceaſed, which is repeated on the ſame ſpot for ſeveral days ſucceſſively. When the pile is burnt out, they ſprinkle the aſhes with milk and conſecrated water. The bones are gathered up with great care, and put into an earthen vaſe, which is kept until an opportunity be found of throwing it, if poſſible, into the Ganges, or, if that

be at too great a diſtance, into ſome other ſacred river.

It will naturally have been obſerved, that the deſcriptions I have given of the ceremonies attending the marriages and funerals of the Hindoos, are confined to thoſe of perſons of opulence or rank; thoſe of people of inferior fortune are naturally in proportion to their ſituation and means.

There are ſome, though few, who bury the dead; and it is ſaid that among theſe it is the duty of the widow to bury herſelf with the body of her huſband. The religious ceremonies being performed, ſhe deſcends into the grave with him, and taking the body in her arms, is with it covered with the earth. I cannot recollect, in the countries in which I have been, to have heard of more than two inſtances of this horrid ceremony *,

The

* Bernier, after ſpeaking of women who burn themſelves, ſays: "Ce ſont certainement des choſes bien "barbares et bien cruelles; mais ce que font les "Brahmens

The Hindoos are naturally cheerful, and are fond of converſation, of play, and of other amuſement. They will ſpend almoſt the whole night in ſeeing dancing and hearing muſic; yet none dance but the women, whoſe profeſſion it is, and who devote themſelves to the pleaſures and amuſement of the public.

They are nevertheleſs extremely ſober; they eat only twice a day, in the morning and evening. It has been already obſerved, that none of the four caſts are allowed to taſte any intoxicating liquor, and even thoſe who may eat meat do it ſparingly.

Their food is prepared in earthen pots: inſtead of plates and diſhes they uſe broad leaves, generally of the palm or plantane tree, neatly ſewn together with a blade of

---

" Brahmens dans quelques endroits des Indes eſt bien " autant ou plus. Car, au lieu de bruler ces femmes, " qui veulent mourir apres la mort de leur maris, ils " les enterrent peu à peu toutes vives, juſqu'à la " gorge, et puis tout d'un coup ſe jettent deux ou trois " deſſus, leurs tordent le cou, et les achevent d'etouffer."

dry

dry graſs, and which are thrown away and renewed at every meal. Like the inhabitants of moſt eaſtern countries, they uſe neither forks nor ſpoons, but only the fing of the right hand, and are ſcrupulouſly nice both before and after meals.

With them, modes and faſhions are unknown; and their dreſſes, like their cuſtoms, are the ſame to day that I ſuppoſe they were at the beginning of the Kaly Youg.

Almoſt all the Hindoos ſhave the head, leaving only a lock on the back part of it, which is covered by their turbans; and they likewiſe ſhave their beards, leaving only ſmall whiſkers, which they preſerve with neatneſs and care *.

The Brahmans who officiate at the temples generally go with their heads uncovered, and the upper part of the body naked.

---

* The Kaſhmirians, and a few other tribes, let their beards grow about a couple of inches long.

The Zennar*, or ſacred ſtring, is hung round the body from the left ſhoulder; a piece of white cotton cloth is wound round the loins, which deſcends under the knee, but lower on the left ſide than on the other; and in cold weather they ſometimes cover their bodies with a ſhawl, and their heads with a red cap.

The Khatries, and in general thoſe who inhabit the country and villages, wear a piece of cotton cloth wrapped round the loins as above deſcribed; another piece of finer cloth, generally muſlin, is thrown over the left ſhoulder, and hangs round the body, ſomething in the manner of a Highlander's plaid; a piece of clear muſlin, almoſt in the ſhape of a handkerchief, is

* The Zennar is made of a particular kind of perennial cotton called Nerma. It is compoſed of a certain number of threads of a fixed length: the Zennar worn by the Khatries has fewer threads than that worn by the Brahmans, and that worn by the Bhyſe fewer than that worn by the Khatries; but thoſe of the Soodra caſt are excluded from this diſtinction, none of them being permitted to wear it.

wrapped very neatly round the head. In the ears, which are always expoſed, all the Hindoos wear large gold rings, ornamented, according to their taſte or means of purchaſing them, with diamonds, rubies, or other precious ſtones.

Some, inſtead of the cloth hung over the ſhoulder, wear a Jama*, or long muſlin robe, neatly ſhaped to the upper part of the body, falling very full from thence, and extending ſo low as almoſt entirely to cover the feet. A muſlin ſaſh is wrapped round the waiſt, the ends of which are generally ornamented with a fringe and border.

Perſons of high rank ſometimes wear above the Jama a ſhort looſe veſt of fine worked muſlin, or ſilk brocaded with ſmall gold or ſilver flowers; and in the cool ſeaſon, of ſhawls. On days of ceremony

* The Mahomedans alſo wear a Jama, but theirs croſſes over, and ties on the right ſide of the breaſt; and that of the Hindoos on the left.

and rejoicing they wear rich bracelets on their arms, jewels on their turbans, and ſtrings of pearls round their necks, hanging down upon the breaſt. On their feet they wear ſlippers of fine woollen cloth, or velvet, which frequently are embroidered with gold or ſilver, and thoſe of princes on great ceremonies even with precious ſtones: but the poorer ſort have them of coarſe cloth or leather, and the lower claſſes wear ſandals *.

Their ſlippers are conſtantly put off on going into an apartment, and left at the entrance, or given to an attendant; nor is

---

* Corpora uſque pedes carbaſo velant; ſoleis pedes, capita linteis vinciunt; lapilli ex auribus pendent; brachia quoque et lacertos auro colunt, quibus inter populares aut nobilitas aut opes eminent. *Qu. Cur. l.* 8. *cap.* 9. Cum ſubito patefacta porta, rex Indus cum duobus adultis filiis occurrit, multum inter omnes barbaros eminens corporis ſpecie. Veſtis erat auro purpuraque diſtincta, quæ etiam crura velabat: aureis ſoleis inſeruerat gemmas: lacerti quoque et brachia margaritis ornata erant. Pendebant ex auribus inſignes candore et magnitudine lapilli.

Qu. Cur. l. 9. *cap.* 1.

it

it poſſible but they muſt be ſhocked at the uſual practice of Europeans in walking with their ſhoes on the clean linen cloth or carpets on which they ſit and occaſionally lie down. But this, like other encroachments on their cuſtoms, they patiently ſubmit to, and even without any appearance of ill humour.

The dreſs of the women varies a little, but not materially; and the diſtinction, as amongſt the men, conſiſts chiefly in the fineneſs of the cloth and the number and value of their jewels. They in general wear a cloſe jacket, which only extends to cover the breaſts, but completely ſhews their form. It has tight ſleeves, that reach about half way to the elbow; and a narrow border round all the edges, painted or embroidered in different colours. A piece of white cotton cloth, wrapped round the loins, and falling down over the legs almoſt to the ankle on one ſide, but not quite ſo low on the other, ſerves as a petticoat.

ticoat. A wide piece of muſlin is thrown over the right ſhoulder, which paſſing under the left arm, is croſſed round the middle, and, being faſtened by tucking part of it under the piece of cloth that is wrapped round the loins, hangs down to the feet. The hair is commonly rolled up into a knot or bunch towards the back of the head, and ſome have curls hanging before and behind the ears. They wear bracelets on their arms, rings in their ears, on their fingers, their ankles, and toes, and ſometimes a ſmall one on one ſide of the noſtril.

In Kaſhmere they wear a jacket like other Hindoo women, a petticoat with a painted border, the hair plaited and hanging down behind, and a fine muſlin veil, that covers the head, and falls down below the middle *.

The Hindoos are averſe to many of thoſe accompliſhments in women, that are

* Mr. Forſter.

ſo

ſo admired by Europeans. They ſay, they would be injurious to that ſimplicity of manners and decorum of behaviour which are requiſite to render them eſtimable in their families: that, by too much engaging the mind, they would lead their attention away from their children and huſband, and give them a diſreliſh to thoſe cares to which they think Providence has deſigned them: and, as they ſtrictly adhere to this opinion, there are few Hindoo women to be found who can either read or write.

But the dancing women, who are the votaries of pleaſure, are taught every qualification which they imagine may tend to captivate and entertain the other ſex. They compoſe a ſeparate claſs, live under the protection of government, and according to their own particular rules.

In the code of Gentoo laws and cuſtoms it is ſaid: "If a dancing girl commit a "crime that renders her property liable to "con-

" confiſcation, the magiſtrate ſhall confiſcate " all her effects, except her clothes, jewels, " and dwelling. In the ſame manner, to " a ſoldier ſhall be left his implements of " war; and to a man exerciſing any pro- " feſſion, the implements of that profeſſion " ſhall be exempted from the confiſcation of " the reſt of his property."

The dancing women eat meat of any kind, except beef. They even drink ſpirituous liquors, which perhaps may have led the Greeks who accompanied Alexander to imagine that the other Hindoos did the ſame.

They appear in a variety of dreſſes. Beſides thoſe that have been already mentioned, they ſometimes wear trowſers, like the Perſians; a Jama of wrought muſlin, or gold or ſilver tiſſue; the hair plaited and hanging down behind, with ſpiral curls on each ſide of the face; and to the gold or ſilver rings on the ankles, in ſome of their dances they attach ſmall bells of the ſame

metals. The figures of the Bacchantes, that are to be met with in antique paintings and bas reliefs, may ſerve as an exact repreſentation of ſome of the dancing women in Hindoſtan.

No religious ceremony, or feſtival of any kind, is thought to be performed with requiſite order and magnificence, unleſs accompanied by dancing; and every great temple has a ſet of dancers belonging to it.

In a country of ſuch vaſt extent of latitude, the complexion as well as the phyſical conſtruction of the people muſt be liable to conſiderable variation; thoſe in the northern, being more fair and robuſt than thoſe in the ſouthern provinces. But the Hindoo women, in general, are finely ſhaped, gentle in their manners, and have ſomething ſoft and even muſical in their voices *.

All

* Mr. Forſter, in his letter from Kaſhmere, dated in April 1783, in ſpeaking of the women, ſays:

"They

All Hindoo families are governed by the male ſenior, to whom great reſpect is ſhown; nor will a ſon ſit down in the preſence of his father, until commanded by him to do ſo *.

The houſes of the Hindoos are generally meaner than might be expected in a country, where uſeful and ornamental architecture has made ſo great progreſs, and with an ingenious people, who are fond of eaſe, of pleaſure, and oſtentation. But the conſtant warmth of the climate, which inclines them to ſeek the air under porticos, or the ſhade of trees, may, perhaps, make

---

"They have a bright, olive complexion, fine features, and are delicately ſhaped. There is a pleaſing freedom in their manners, without any tendency to immodeſty, which ſeems the reſult of that confidence, which the Hindoo huſbands in general repoſe in their wives."

* The ſame gentleman (Mr. Forſter) obſerves, that in the courſe of his reſidence in India, and acquaintance with the Hindoos, he never knew an inſtance of direct undutifulneſs to parents; to which I can add the teſtimony of my own experience.

them leſs attentive to the internal convenience and elegance of their houſes. In the ſouthern parts of India, even thoſe of perſons of rank and wealth, though large, are but of a mean appearance. For the ſake of coolneſs, and to avoid the trouble of ſtairs, they are only of one ſtory. On each ſide of the door towards the ſtreet, is a narrow gallery, covered by the ſlope of the roof of the houſe, which projects over it, and which, as far as the gallery extends, is ſupported by brick or wooden pillars. The floor of the gallery is raiſed about thirty inches above the level of the ſtreet; and Peons* and bearers of palankeens belonging to the houſe are generally found ſitting and lying down there. The entrance leads into a court, part of which is alſo ſurrounded by a gallery like that without. On one ſide of the court there is a large room on a level with the floor of

* See page 301, note.

the

the gallery, and open in front, which is ſpread with mats or carpets, and theſe again covered with white cotton cloth. Here the maſter of the houſe receives viſits, and tranſacts his buſineſs. The entrances from this court to the private apartments and offices are by very ſmall doors. The houſes may be more or leſs extenſive, may have one or more courts or public rooms; but they are commonly built on a plan ſimilar to that I have deſcribed. In the northern part of Hindoſtan, however, houſes of two or three ſtories are very frequent; and ruins of palaces are to be met with over all the country, which announce the ſplendor and magnificence of its ancient princes.

In the code of Gentoo laws we find a prohibition of the uſe of fire-arms; which, as the tranſlator obſerves, in records of ſuch unfathomable antiquity, muſt cauſe a conſiderable degree of ſurpriſe. The word in Sanſkrit is *agnee aſter*, or weapons of fire;

and mention is alſo made of *ſhet agnee*, or the weapon that kills a hundred men at once, which is tranſlated cannon. The Pooran Saſtras aſcribes the invention of thoſe deſtructive engines to the artiſt Baeſh-kookerma, who is ſaid to have forged all the weapons for the war that was maintained in the Sutty Youg between Dewta and Aſſoor, or the good and evil ſpirits.

It is certain, that even in thoſe parts of Hindoſtan that never were frequented either by Mahomedans or Europeans, we have met with rockets, a weapon which the natives almoſt univerſally employ in war. The rocket conſiſts of a tube of iron, about eight inches long, and an inch and a half in diameter, cloſed at one end *. It is filled in the ſame manner as an ordinary ſkyrocket, and faſtened towards the end of a piece of bamboo, ſcarcely as thick as a walking cane, and about four feet long,

* See the title-page.

which

which is pointed with iron. At the oppoſite end of the tube from the iron point, or that towards the head of the ſhaft, is the match. The man who uſes it, points the end that is ſhod with iron to which the rocket is fixed, to the object to which he means to direct it; and, ſetting fire to the match, it goes off with great velocity. By the irregularity of its motion, it is difficult to be avoided, and ſometimes acts with conſiderable effect, eſpecially among cavalry.

Fire balls, or blue lights, employed in beſieged places in the night, to obſerve the motions of the beſiegers, are, I believe, to be found in every part of Hindoſtan, and in full as great perfection as any that are made in Europe. Fire-works ſeem to have been a principal article of amuſement with the Hindoos from the earlieſt times, and are conſtantly made uſe of on all occaſions of rejoicing.

I would not, however, venture poſitively to affirm, that gunpowder, grained, or exactly ſuch as is made at preſent, was known to the Hindoos before it was diſcovered by the Europeans. But it ſeems evident that they knew, much earlier than we did, a compoſition that poſſeſſed ſome of its qualities, and gave bodies a projectile motion. Had they received the diſcovery of it from ſtrangers, they would have received at the ſame time the weapons with which it is employed; and, in that caſe, would not have had recourſe to the leſs ingenious invention of the rocket, though being accuſtomed to this weapon, they may ſtill continue to uſe it.

The ſhet-agnee, I confeſs I am at a loſs to account for, unleſs it mean thoſe cavities that have been found in ſome of their fortreſſes, hewn in the ſolid rocks, and formed to a certain elevation for the purpoſe of throwing ſtones on beſiegers, in the manner

manner that ſhells are thrown from mortars.

A compoſition of a ſimilar kind with gunpowder, was found in uſe with the Chineſe. Some have pretended that the mode of making it was communicated to them by Europeans, which has been confuted by thoſe who alledge, that it was invented by themſelves. But there are ſeveral reaſons to induce us to believe, that the people of Pegu, Siam, and China, received many of their improvements from Hindoſtan.

In the ſame article of the Hindoo laws, by which fire-arms and poiſoned weapons are forbidden, it is alſo ſaid: "Nor ſhall "he (meaning the prince) ſlay in war an "eunuch, nor any perſon, who putting "his hands together ſhall ſupplicate for "quarter, nor any one who has no means "of eſcape, nor any one who is ſitting "down, nor one who ſays '*I am become* "*of your party*,' nor any man who is "aſleep,

" asleep, nor any one who is naked, nor " any one who is not employed in war, " or who is come to see the battle, nor " any one whilst he is fighting with ano- " ther, nor any one whose weapons are " broken, nor any one who is fearful of " the fight, and who runneth away."

In these laws, mention is made of the Purrekeh, or trial by ordeal, which was one of the first laws instituted by Moses among the Jews*. Fire or water were usually employed, but in India the mode varies, and is often determined by the choice of the parties. I remember a letter from a man of rank, who was accused of corresponding in time of war with the enemy, in which he says, " Let my ac- " cuser be produced; let me see him " face to face; let the most venomous " snakes be put into a pot; let us put our

* See the fifth chapter of Numbers, from the 12th to the 31st verse.

" hands

" hands into it together; let it be covered
" for a certain time; and he who remain-
" eth unhurt ſhall be innocent."

This trial is always accompanied with the ſolemnities of a religious ceremony, and in ſome parts of India, it is ſaid, the *onion* is introduced to render it more awful *. It is alſo mentioned, that in thoſe parts the uſe of that plant is forbidden, though a vegetable diet, without any other reſtriction, I believe, is ſo ſtrongly recommended. The *onion* having been alſo held in veneration by the Egyptians, if the ſame idea really obtains in Hindoſtan, we ſhould ſuppoſe that the natives of the one muſt have received it from thoſe of the other country. That plant preſents nothing, either in its appearance or qualities, to entitle it to peculiar reſpect; and the kind of awful regard paid to it muſt therefore have ariſen from ſome particular circum-

* Mr. Forſter.

ſtance

ſtance with which we are now unacquainted.

An abhorrence to the ſhedding of blood,—the offspring of nature, nurſed by habit, and ſanctified by religion,—the influence of the moſt regular of climates, which leſſens the wants of life, and renders men averſe to labour, perhaps alſo the moderate uſe of animal food, and abſtinence from ſpirituous liquors, contribute to render the Hindoos the mildeſt, and probably the moſt enervated, inhabitants of the globe*. That they ſhould poſſeſs patience and reſignation under calamity, is perhaps not much to be wondered at, as the ſame cauſes that tend to damp exertion may produce theſe qualities; but beſides theſe, we have number-

* In a country of ſuch immenſe extent, there are undoubtedly exceptions to this general character; people accuſtomed to war acquire courage by being frequently expoſed to danger; and, as has already been obſerved, the inhabitants of the northern parts of Hindoſtan are hardier and ſtronger than thoſe of the ſouth.

leſs

leſs inſtances of firmneſs and active courage that occaſion a conſiderable degree of ſurpriſe. The gentle and generally timid Hindoo, while under the influence of religion, or his ideas of duty and honour *, will not only meet death with idifference, but embrace it by choice.

An Engliſhman, whilſt on a hunting party, haſtily ſtruck a Peon †, for improperly

* Many notions of honour depend on certain received opinions. The Greek and Roman heroes do not ſeem to have been ſo ſuſceptible of certain expreſſions of reproach, or to have reſented them as affronts, which a modern, of perhaps leſs virtue, would rather die than ſubmit to. Themiſtocles could ſay, Strike, but hear me.—Falſehood and treachery ſeem to be held diſhonourable every where.—This may perhaps be denied; but I believe many travellers have fallen into error, by haſtily judging of nations by what may have particularly happened to themſelves: and although theſe vices may be more prevalent in ſome countries than in others, I never knew of any country in which a perſon, who happened to be diſcovered in either, did not endeavour to excuſe and juſtify himſelf, and thus betray his conſciouſneſs of ignominy.

† A Peon is properly a foot ſoldier. Men of rank have always Peons in their ſervice. They wear a ſabre and

perly letting looſe a grey-hound. The Peon happened to be a Rajah-pout, which is the higheſt tribe of Hindoo ſoldiers. On receiving the blow, he ſtarted back with an appearance of horror and amazement, and drew his poignard. But again compoſing himſelf, and looking ſtedfaſtly at his maſter, he ſaid, "I am your ſervant, I "have long eat your bread*;"—and having pronounced this, he plunged the dagger into his own boſom. In thoſe few words he ſurely pathetically expreſſed, "The arm that has been nouriſhed by you, "ſhall not be employed to take away your

---

and poignard. They attend their maſters when they go abroad, carry meſſages, and are in general extremely faithful. Thoſe of the proper Hindoo caſts will not do any menial office; but Europeans frequently take Parians into their ſervice, whom they employ as Peons.

* The expreſſion literally is, *I have long eat your rice.* Sometimes it is ſaid, *I have long eat your ſalt*, from the ſcarcity of that article in many parts of Hindoſtan, and the value conſequently attached to it, from its being ſuch a neceſſary ingredient in food.

"life;

" life; but in ſparing yours, I muſt give " up my own, as I cannot ſurvive my diſ- " honour."

Some ſepoys in the Engliſh ſervice, being condemned to death on account of a mutiny, it was ordered that they ſhould be blown off from cannon in front of the army. Some of the offenders being grenadiers, on ſeeing others, who were not led forth to ſuffer before them, they called out: " As we have generally ſhown the " way on ſervices of danger, why ſhould " we be denied that diſtinction now?" They walked towards the guns with firmneſs and compoſure; requeſted to be ſpared the indignity of being tied; and, placing their breaſts to the muzzles of the cannon, were ſhot away. Though ſeveral had been condemned, the behaviour of theſe men operated ſo ſtrongly on the feelings of the commanding officer, that the reſt were pardoned.

The Rajah of Ongole having been driven from his poſſeſſions, after ſome fruitleſs attempts, he reſolved to make a laſt effort to recover them. He accordingly entered the province at the head of thoſe, who had ſtill accompanied him, and was joined by many of his ſubjects. The Engliſh officer who commanded at Ongole for the Nabob of Arcot, marched to oppoſe him. They met: in the engagement the Rajah was killed by a muſket ſhot; and moſt of his principal followers having alſo fallen, the reſt were broken, and fled. The Engliſh commander *, being informed that a relation of the Rajah was on the field wounded, went up to him with an interpreter, to offer him his protection and aſſiſtance. He found him lying on the ground, and ſpeaking to an attendant, of whom he was inquiring whether the Rajah's body had been carried off. Being in-

* Lieutenant Colonel Fletcher.

formed

formed that it had, without making any reply, he gave himſelf a wound with his poignard, of which he almoſt inſtantly expired.

When a Hindoo finds that life is near its end, he will talk of his diſſolution with great compoſure; and if near to the Ganges, or any other ſacred river, will deſire to be carried out to expire on its bank; nor will he do any thing to preſerve life, that may be in any way contrary to the rules of his caſt or religion. One of the natives, who was employed in an eminent poſt at an Engliſh ſettlement, being prevailed on in a dangerous illneſs to receive a viſit from an European doctor, it was found that by long abſtinence, which in ſickneſs the Hindoos often carry to exceſs, the ſtomach would no longer retain any thing. The diſorder being of a putrid kind, the doctor wiſhed to give the bark in ſtrong wine; but the Hindoo poſitively refuſed to take it, notwithſtanding many ar-

guments that were uſed both by the doctor and the governor who accompanied him, and who had a conſiderable degree of influence over the Hindoo. They promiſed that it ſhould remain an inviolable ſecret: but he replied with great calmneſs, that he could not conceal it from himſelf, and a few days afterwards fell a victim to his perſeverance.

Though I could add many examples both of active and patient courage, I ſhall conclude with relating the principal circumſtances of a melancholy ſtory, which has already been detailed by a juſtly eſteemed hiſtorian, and is commemorated and ſung in ballads, according to the cuſtom of Hindoſtan.

Monſieur de Buſſy having, in 1757, led the army which he then commanded into the provinces called the Northern Circars, the revenue of which had been through his means granted to the French by the Soubadar Salabat Jung; Viziaramrauze, Rajah of Vizianagaram, the moſt powerful

of

of the Rajahs of Cicacole, was chiefly conſulted by him on the affairs of that province, and enjoyed a principal ſhare in his confidence. The Rajah, having either farmed the revenue of Cicacole at a certain rent, or being entruſted with the management of it, ſoon made uſe of the authority which this gave him to gratify an animoſity that had long occupied his mind.

The poſſeſſions of Rangarow, Rajah of Boobelee, bordered upon thoſe of Vizia-ramrauze, and diſputes concerning their boundaries, and the diverting the courſe of ſtreams *, were very frequent. But the ſecret, and probably the moſt powerful cauſe of his hate, was the conſequence that Rangarow derived from his birth, which the other, notwithſtanding his ſuperior wealth and poſſeſſions, aſpired to in vain. Rangarow enjoyed the honour of an illuſtrious anceſtry, and could not always

* In a country where water is ſo much required for cultivation, this is often the ſubject of great diſſenſion between neighbouring proprietors of lands.

ſuppreſs the indignation which a ſuperior birth ſometimes produces in an elevated mind, when expoſed to the inſolence of one of inferior extraction, to whom fortune has been more propitious; he claimed his deſcent from the ancient kings of Orixa, and his perſon and family were univerſally reſpected. Viziaramrauze, comparatively with him, was but of mean extraction; his family had been raiſed and enriched by their intrigues at the courts of Mahomedan viceroys. He took an early opportunity of writing to Rangarow, calling on him to attend him as the delegate of the government, and to account with him for his tribute. The other ſaw the danger he was expoſed to if he refuſed—the indignity if he complied; and his feelings being too powerful to yield to the ſuggeſtions of prudence, without deigning to reply, he wrote to Monſieur de Buſſy, aſſuring him of his readineſs to conform in every thing to his commands,

excepting

excepting that of attending on his inveterate enemy; a mortification he conjured him not to inſiſt on. The letter was probably intercepted by Viziaramrauze, and Rangarow's ſilence and non-appearance were conſtrued into contempt and diſaffection. About the ſame time, ſome Sepoys in the French ſervice, with ſome of Viziaramrauze's peons, in attempting to enter the Boobelee diſtrict, were driven back. The people of that country ſay they were ſent on purpoſe by him, without any communication to the Rajah, with a view to provoke reſiſtance. But in whatever way it aroſe, the circumſtance confirmed the opinion Monſieur de Buſſy had been taught to entertain, and Viziaramrauze availed himſelf of that diſpoſition to perſuade him to march towards Boobelee with their joint forces. When Rangarow was informed of the motion of the French army, and that Viziaramrauze accompanied it, the former attempt that had been made to en-

ter his territory, and his letter not having been replied to, concurred in making him believe that his ruin was reſolved on. Being too proud to fly, or preferring any alternative to that of living as a ſuppliant in another country, he took the fatal reſolution, inſtead of going and appealing to the juſtice of Monſieur de Buſſy, to prepare for defence, and ſuffered himſelf to be ſhut up in a ſmall and ill-conſtructed fort with his family and principal relations. The place was immediately attacked; the artillery ſoon made a breach in the walls, but the beſieged, fighting with the courage which is produced by reſentment and deſpair, repulſed an aſſault, though ſuſtained for a conſiderable time. On the 24th of January 1758, a ſecond aſſault was made, and again repulſed; but the number of the beſieged being now much diminiſhed, Rangarow aſſembled his kinſmen, and informed them, "that as it was impoſſible to "defend the place much longer, or per-

"haps

" haps even to reſiſt another aſſault, he " had reſolved not to outlive his misfor- " tunes, or expoſe himſelf and his family " to the humiliation of appearing as pri- " ſoners before a perſon he deſpiſed: that " he did not wiſh however that his ex- " ample ſhould have any influence on " them, nor would he offer them any ad- " vice: that having followed the dictates " of his own mind, he left them to be " guided by theirs; nor did he ſee that " they ſtood in the ſame predicament " that he did, for as the reſentment of " their enemies was directed entirely againſt " himſelf, they would probably, after his " death, be leſs inclined to ſeverity." But they unanimouſly approved of his ſenti- ments, and declared that they would not ſurvive him. He then ſent for his only child, an infant ſon, and taking him in his arms, and addreſſing him as all that re- mained of an ancient, illuſtrious, but un- fortunate race of princes, he gave him his

dying bleſſing, and delivering him to the care of two of his officers, in whoſe prudence he could confide, he deſired them to conceal themſelves with him in a ſecret place till night, and endeavour to convey him to one of his friends, a Rajah, among the weſtern mountains, with this meſſage: "Rangarow ſends you his ſon, as the laſt "pledge of his confidence and affection."

The reſolutions taken in this aſſembly being adopted by all who were in the place, they employed a ſhort time in performing ſome religious ceremonies, and in taking a ſolemn leave of each other. Returning to their reſpective dwellings, they prepared them for the flames with ſtraw, and ſuch other combuſtible materials as they could procure. The women aſſiſted them with alacrity and zeal, and every one received death from the hand of the perſon to whom ſhe was the moſt nearly allied, or gave it with her own. This dreadful ſcene being cloſed, they ſet fire to their houſes, that they

they might yet ſee this laſt ceremony performed, and be certain that the bodies of their women ſhould not be expoſed to any inſult.

The enemy obſerving the conflagration, had again mounted the breach at the time Rangarow and his followers returned to it. He fell by a muſket ball; and every man who accompanied him was killed, as they diſdained to receive quarter. The only living perſon found in the fort was an old Brahman, who related the diſmal tale *.

* I was told the circumſtance as above related by ſome of the Rajahs of that part of the country, who had the means of being perfectly informed. The country was in the poſſeſſion of the Rajah of Vizianagaram not many years ago, though, I believe, Rangarow's ſon was then alive, and perhaps is now living. He was ſupported by the benevolence of ſome of the Rajahs.

In Quintus Curtius we have an example ſimilar to this:—*Sed cum in obſidione perſeveraſſet, oppidani deſperatâ ſalute, ignem ſubjecere tectis, ſe quoque ac liberos conjugeſque incendio cremant. Quod cum ipſi augerent, hoſtes extinguerent, nova forma pugnæ erat: delebant incolæ urbem, hoſtes defendebant.* Q. C. lib. ix. cap. 4.

Monſieur

Monſieur de Buſſy, who is ſaid to have been deeply affected by this horrid cataſtrophe, reſolved to quit a place where every object recalled to his mind the unhappy fate of its late inhabitants. Notwithſtanding the various revolutions which the empire had undergone, they ſtill had retained a ſmall and remote corner of the extenſive poſſeſſions of their anceſtors, which they might have continued to enjoy for many ages yet to come, but for the precipitancy of Europeans, who, on more occaſions than this, have been the cauſe of much miſery and wretchedneſs, by blindly taking part in Aſiatic diſputes, without properly inquiring into and underſtanding them.

The two officers to whoſe care Rangarow had confided his ſon, having ſucceſsfully executed the truſt that was committed to them, came diſguiſed as Yogeys into the camp of Viziaramrauze the day preceding that on which the army was to march from Boobelee. With the freedom allowed to

thoſe

thoſe devotees, they took their ſtation under a tree near his tent without being queſtioned. In the night they privately entered it, by creeping on the ground, and cutting a hole in a ſide of it where there happened to be no centinel. He was a corpulent unwieldy man; they found him lying on his bed aſleep; but awaking him, and telling him who they were, they ſtruck him with their poignards. The guards, on hearing a noiſe, ruſhed in; but Viziaramrauze was dead, being pierced with ſeveral wounds. Though they might have eſcaped by the way they came in, yet they made no attempt to do ſo; but ſtanding by, and pointing to the body, ſaid, "Look here, "we are ſatisfied." They related the manner they had taken to avenge their chief; and, having declared that no other knew their intention, or was concerned with them, they were put to death, ſatisfied with what they had done, and entirely reſigned to receive their puniſhment.

The

The Hindoos are great obſervers of decorum; their manners are unaffected, they poſſeſs much natural politeneſs, and have an extraordinary degree of caution in not ſaying or doing any thing which they imagine may offend. The Brahmans in general ſhew the leaſt civility, which is owing to the precedence they aſſume over the other caſts, and the deference that is continually ſhewn them.

Some years ago, the governor of an European ſettlement was invited with ſome other gentlemen to a feaſt given by a Rajah on account of a wedding. It conſiſted, as their evening entertainments always do, of fireworks, dancing, and ſinging. The place where the Rajah received the gueſts, was a parterre, or ſmall flower garden, ſurrounded by an arcade, or open gallery, ſpread with carpets, and, as is uſual, theſe covered with white linen cloth. In the middle of the parterre there was a baſon with a fountain. The gueſts entered by a

gate

gate in the centre of the building oppoſite to the ſide where the Rajah ſat; and walking up through the parterre, ſaluted him, and took their ſeats in the gallery. An elderly man, after having paid his compliments to the Rajah, inadvertently fell into the baſon. The attendants immediately ran to his aſſiſtance, and took him out. The words and looks of all the natives were highly expreſſive of concern; but when their anxiety had ſubſided, by being informed that he had not received any injury, they were not a little ſurpriſed to obſerve ſome of the Europeans in an immoderate fit of laughter, for which they were entirely at a loſs to account.

I remember a young Rajah, a boy of about twelve years old, who came to viſit an Engliſhman, and though he never had ſeen any European before, his manner was polite and unembarraſſed; neither did he expreſs any ſurpriſe at dreſſes and objects that were entirely new to him: yet this did

did not proceed from apathy or want of obſervation, for I underſtood afterwards that he was very inquiſitive, and aſked a variety of pertinent queſtions.

The mental as well as phyſical faculties of the human ſpecies ſeem to arrive ſooner at maturity in Hindoſtan than in colder climates, and it is not uncommon to ſee children behave and ſpeak with a degree of gravity and propriety, which ſeems incompatible with their age. But the mind, like the body, perhaps does not enjoy that vigour which is to be found in the natives of Europe. Beſides moral cauſes, which undoubtedly have conſiderable effect, the *climate* certainly tends to enervate at leaſt the body; it is leſs capable of bearing fatigue; the wants of life being few and eaſily procured, exertion is leſs excited; and every thing conduces to encourage indolence and love of eaſe.

The venereal diſeaſe, that inveterate enemy of the human race, is to be met with

in

in every part of Hindoſtan; and, I preſume, exiſted there long before the diſcovery of America by Columbus. The idea that it was originally peculiar to that quarter of the globe, is certainly erroneous, and it even ſeems queſtionable, whether it was firſt brought from thence into Europe. Had it been carried into Hindoſtan by Europeans ſince the diſcovery of America, the time is ſo recent, and the evil ſo great, that in a country inhabited by an enlightened people, in which there is a conſtant correſpondence between the principal towns, the time when it appeared, and probably the manner in which it was introduced, would have been marked and handed down to us. But there is no ſuch tradition to be found; and it is but fair, therefore, to conclude, that the Hindoos were afflicted with it long before we became acquainted with them.

The gout likewiſe is every where found, though it ſeems milder in its effects and leſs

frequent than in Europe, which may partly be owing to the extreme temperance of the people, and to the humour being in ſome degree carried off by the almoſt conſtant perſpiration that is produced by the heat of the climate.

The ſmall-pox, wherever it appears, is more rapid in its progreſs, and generally more fatal, than in colder countries. Villages may be ſeen almoſt wholly deſerted by their inhabitants from the apprehenſion of this diſorder; which circumſtance, amongſt other things, may ſerve as a proof, that the Hindoos do not believe in predeſtination.

The Hindoos are prohibited under the ſevereſt penalty, that of loſing their caſt, from quitting Hindoſtan without permiſſion; and the rules and reſtrictions with reſpect to their diet, render it almoſt impoſſible, without ſome exemption from them. Whether merchants and bankers have a general diſpenſation, or only travel by

by particular leave of the principal Brahmans at the places where they reſide, we know not: but they and their agents now, as formerly, ſettle in different foreign countries, and perform the voyages neceſſary to their occupation. They, however, every where abſtain from eating ſuch food as is forbidden them by their laws, and obſerve, as far as poſſible, their ablutions, and other religious duties*.

There is a claſs of people, called Banjaries, that do not belong to any caſt, or any particular part of Hindoſtan. They live in tents, and travel in ſeparate bodies, each of which is governed by its own particular regulations. They come frequently to towns on the ſea coaſt, with bullocks loaded with wheat and other articles; and, in exchange, take away ſpices, cloths, &c. but principally ſalt, which they carry to the interior parts of the country. Many of

* Mr. Stuart.

theſe parties have ſome thouſands of oxen belonging to them. They are rarely otherways moleſted, even in war, than by being ſometimes preſſed into the ſervice of an army to carry baggage or proviſions; but as ſoon as their ſervices are no more wanted, they are paid and diſmiſſed.

There are many monuments in India, which prove that the Hindoos, not only in the ſcience of aſtronomy, but alſo in mechanics, and other arts, had a knowledge greatly ſuperior to that which they now poſſeſs; and there is a particular character ſtamped on all their ancient works, which, like the pencil of a painter, diſtinguiſhes the original from the performance of thoſe who may have copied it, however excellent, or even ſuperior, the copy may be. A great reſemblance will be found between the images of the Egyptians and Hindoos; but though I do not pretend to give my opinion as deciſive upon the ſubject, I cannot help obſerving, that

in

in examining ſome of the former, and remarking this reſemblance, it gave me the idea of a copy in which ſome of the acceſſary parts of the original were left out.

The art of painting is amongſt the Hindoos, but in an imperfect ſtate; nor does any thing remain to ſhew that it was ever ſuperior to what it now is. They are not ſo deficient in the art of colouring as drawing. Some of their pictures are indeed finiſhed with great nicety, but they ſeem to be almoſt wholly ignorant of the principles of perſpective.

Though they appear to have made greater progreſs in ſculpture, their works in that art in general are but rude; but, as already obſerved, in many reſpects bear a ſtrong reſemblance to thoſe of the Egyptians.

They do not ſeem to be guided by any regular rules of architecture, at leaſt according to our notions; and, amongſt the innumerable columns with which ſome of their temples abound, we often find a

variety of ſhapes without ſymmetry or order. Yet the ſtupendous ſize of the towers of thoſe temples, the height and ſolidity of the walls, the ſpace that is incloſed by them, and the immenſe labour, which the whole announces *, give them an appearance of majeſty, and command reſpect.

We do not poſſeſs any ſufficient knowledge of their muſic to enable us to give an opinion upon it. But though ſome of their airs are very melodious, they ſeem to be but little advanced in that art, comparatively with the progreſs it has made in Europe.

They have a great variety of muſical inſtruments. Thoſe uſed in war are, the Nagar, a kind of great kettle drum, which is carried on a camel, and ſometimes on an elephant; the Dole, a ſort of long narrow

* The towers are in general entirely covered with ſtatues and figures in relief, of their different deities.

drum,

drum, that is ſlung round the neck of the perſon who beats it; the Tamtam, a flat drum, reſembling a tabor, but larger and louder; the Talan, or cymbal; and various ſorts of trumpets. But inſtead of the trumpet, the mountaineers and inhabitants of the woods, uſe a horn, and thoſe on the ſea coaſt ſometimes a large conch ſhell.

To accompany the dancers and ſingers they uſe the Dole and Tamtam, by occaſionally ſtriking or rubbing them with their fingers; flutes of different ſorts; the Been, which is a ſtringed inſtrument, reſembling a very large guitar, but of greater powers; an inſtrument that is not unlike the ancient lyre; and ſmall cymbals that are frequently made of ſilver.

The Tary is a trumpet of a great ſize and moſt lugubrious ſound, which they ſometimes uſe to announce the death of perſons of diſtinction, and conſtantly at their funerals.

At the temples they occaſionally uſe all their different inſtruments.

There are ſtrollers, whoſe occupation is to intrap ſnakes, who uſe an inſtrument called Magouty, reſembling a ſmall bag-pipe, in order, as they pretend, to bring them from their lurking places. They carry a number of thoſe reptiles with them in bags, which, though of the moſt venomous kind, they take out with the naked hand; and, throwing them on the ground, they are taught to rear and move about to the ſound of their muſic. They very gravely ſay, that by certain incantations, which they only are acquainted with, they cannot do them any harm. But it is probable, that the fangs which convey the poiſon are taken out; though others ſay, that they only have the precaution to make them expend their venom, by frequently biting ſomething previous to their ſhewing them.

Some

Some of their jugglers are ſo extremely expert, that ſeveral of the early travellers and miſſionaries ſeem to have been fully perſuaded, that many of their tricks were performed by ſupernatural powers, obtained by means of conjurations.

When we obſerve how few and ſimple the utenſils are, that are employed by the artiſans in Hindoſtan of every kind, we muſt be ſurpriſed at the niceneſs and delicacy of ſome of their works, and the ſize and magnificence of others; for which nothing but the extreme attention and unwearied patience which characterize the inhabitants of that country can account.

The weaver early in the morning ſets up his loom under the ſhade of a tree, and takes it down in the evening. The fine muſlins are indeed woven within doors, the thread being too delicate to be expoſed to the agitation of the air; but it is not uncommon, near manufacturing villages,

to ſee groves full of looms employed in weaving the coarſer cloths.

The ſilverſmith often works for daily hire, and brings his whole apparatus to the houſe of the perſon who employs him. His furniture is a common earthen pot; his crucibles are made of clay mixed with the aſhes of cow-dung; and theſe, with a ſmall anvil, a file, a hammer, and a pair of pincers, form a pretty exact liſt of the furniture of his ſhop. With clay, modelled with the fingers, he will imitate any thing that may be given to him; and ſome of their works in filligree are extremely delicate and curious.

The utenſils of all the artiſans and manufacturers partake of the ſame kind of ſimplicity.

Lacquering and gilding muſt have been long known to the Hindoos, and employed by them in various works of luxury and ornament. We find them in uſe all over Hindoſtan,

Hindoſtan, though in ſome parts, the lackering is in a greater degree of perfection than in others *.

In the towns and villages, not only every caſt, but each claſs of artiſans and manufacturers, has its own particular quarter. The Chandalas and all unclean tribes are in ſome extremity by themſelves, nor dare they even paſs through the ſtreets that are inhabited by any of the ſuperior caſts.

Rice is the principal article of nouriſhment of all the natives, and the firſt object of attention in the cultivation of it is to have the ſoil plentifully ſupplied with water. If there be a ſcarcity of water, the harveſt

---

* Bernier, in ſpeaking of the Kaſhmirians, ſays :

" Ils ſont des Palekys des bois, des lits, des coffres, " des écritoires, des caſſettes, des culiers, et pluſieurs " autres ſortes de petits ouvrages, qui ont une beauté " toute particuliere, et qui ſe diſtribuent par toutes " les Indes. Ils ſavent y donner un verni, et ſuivre " et contrefaire ſi adroitement les veines d'un certain " bois, qui on a de fort belles, y appliquant des fillets " d'or, qu'il n'y a rien de plus beau."

Voyages de Bernier.

is in proportion to it; and a ſucceſſion of dry weather in the rainy ſeaſon is ſure to produce a famine. In travelling through Hindoſtan, ſome opinion may be formed of the wiſdom and benignity of the government, by the number, and ſtate of preſervation of the tanks and water courſes *. Unhappily, in many of thoſe countries that groan under a foreign yoke, theſe and other public works of utility or magnificence, being neglected, are going gradually to decay.

When the corn is grown to a certain height, it is plucked up, and tranſplanted in ſmall parcels into fields of about a hundred yards ſquare, ſeparated from each other by ridges of earth, which are daily ſupplied with water, that is let in upon them from the neighbouring tanks.

When the water in the tanks falls below the level of the channels that are made to

* See page 92.

let

let it out, it is drawn by what is called on the coaſt of Coromandel a Picoti, a machine equally ſimple and ingenious. It is compoſed of a piece of timber, generally a palm-tree, fixed upright in the ground, ſupported on each ſide, and forked at the top to admit another piece, which moves tranſverſely on a ſtrong pin driven through the fork. The tranſverſe timber is flat on one ſide, and has pieces of wood acroſs it, in the manner of ſteps. At one end of this timber there is a large bucket, at the other a weight. A man walking down the ſteps throws the bucket into the well or tank; by going up and by means of the weight he raiſes it; and another perſon ſtanding below empties it into a channel made to convey the water into the fields. The man who moves the machine may ſupport himſelf by long bamboos that are fixed in the way of a railing from the top of the piece of upright timber towards the well. On

emptying

emptying the buckets, they ſing out the number that has been drawn, and add to it the name of Samy, or ſome other deity. Every garden has its Picotis, and every evening at ſun-ſet, you ſee them in motion and hear the ſong.

In a country ſo full of inhabitants, and where the price of labour is ſo cheap, thoſe complicated machines that are invented to ſupply the place of many hands, being leſs required, genius in this reſpect is ſeldom excited; and the knowledge of the Hindoos in mechanic powers, and the laws of motion, ſeems therefore to have only kept pace with their wants.

Beſides rice, there is a variety of other grains, which, as they require leſs water, may be planted on high lands. But for the rice they chooſe the loweſt ſituations that can be found. Wheat, I believe, is no where cultivated lower than about the 18th degree of latitude, but it is every where to

be

be purchaſed, as, beſides what is imported by ſea, it is brought into the ſouthern provinces by the Banjaries *.

The Riuts, or cultivators of the ground, are now kept in many countries in a ſtate of great penury and wretchedneſs; a melancholy reflection, eſpecially when we conſider, that on their labour depends all that we enjoy. I remember, in travelling to have ſpoken, by an interpreter, to ſome who were repoſing themſelves in the heat of noon in a Tope †, or grove, where I happened to halt. They gave me an account of their fatigues and their misfortunes; and, making uſe of ſome of thoſe geſtures that are common to the people of India, and often very expreſſive, one of them ſhewed me his feet covered with bliſters by being alternately in the water

* See page 321.

† Topes are very frequent, and ſome of them are of conſiderable extent, containing perhaps 100 acres of land. They are generally either of Tamarind or Mango-trees, planted in regular rows.

and

and on the ſcorching ground; and, pointing to ſome coarſe rice and a few pepper pods, ſaid: "*This is all we have in return.*" I am ſorry to add, that I fear he gave too faithful a repreſentation of the ſtate of ſome millions beſides himſelf.

With the firſt accounts we have of Hindoſtan, a mighty empire at once opens to our view, which in extent, riches, and the number of its inhabitants, has not yet been equalled by any one nation on the globe. We find ſalutary laws, and an ingenious and refined ſyſtem of religion, eſtabliſhed; ſciences and arts known and practiſed; and all of theſe evidently brought to perfection by the accumulated experience of many preceding ages. We ſee a country abounding in fair and opulent cities *; magnificent temples and palaces; uſeful

* *Gour*, called alſo Lucknouti, ſuppoſed to be the Gangia Regia of Ptolemy, ſtood on the left bank of the Ganges, about twenty-five miles below Rajimāl. It

uſeful and ingenious artiſts employing the precious ſtones and metals in curious workmanſhip;

It is ſaid to have been the capital of Bengal ſeven hundred and thirty years before Chriſt. It was repaired and beautified by the Mahomedan emperor Acbar, who gave it the name of Jenutabad, but was deſerted by its inhabitants on account of an epidemical diſtemper, who imagined that it was abandoned by its patron deity, and devoted to divine vengeance. No part of the ſite of ancient Gour is nearer to the preſent bank of the Ganges than four miles and a half; but a ſmall ſtream, which communicates with the Ganges, runs by its weſt ſide, and is navigable in the rainy ſeaſon. On the eaſt ſide, in ſome places within two miles of it, is the river Mahanda, which is always navigable, and alſo runs into the Ganges. The ruins of Gour are on the old bank of the Ganges, and extend not leſs than fifteen miles in length, and from two or three in breadth. Several villages ſtand on part of its ſite; the remainder is covered with thick foreſts, the habitation of tygers and other beaſts of prey, or become arable land, though the ſoil is chiefly compoſed of brick-duſt. Maj. RENNEL.

"*Cannoge*, the ruins of which are of great extent, is ſituated on the right bank of the Ganges, near the place where the Caliny or Calinuddy river joins it in lat. 27. 3. and eaſt long. from Greenwich 80. 13. It is ſaid to have been built above one thouſand years before Chriſt, and is mentioned as the capital of Hindoſtan,

manſhip; manufacturers fabricating cloths, which, in the fineneſs of their texture, and the

doſtan under the predeceſſor of Phoor, or Porus. The ſucceſſor of Porus, Sinſarchund, or the Sandracotta of the Greeks, paid tribute to Alexander's ſucceſſors; and Jona, the ſecond in ſucceſſion from Sinſarchund, reigned at Cannoge; it may therefore be ſuppoſed that, as it was the capital under the predeceſſor of Porus, and under Jona, it was alſo the capital in the intermediate reigns; and if ſo, it was the place where the ambaſſadors of Seleucus were received, which they mention by the name of Palibothra. In extent and grandeur, Cannoge perfectly anſwers to the deſcription of Palibothra. Some Hindoo writers give magnificent accounts of its riches and populouſneſs. No longer ago than the ſixth century it contained thirty thouſand ſhops and ſtalls where betle-nut was ſold *.

Ptolemy makes Palibothra appear to be in lat. 27. between the towns of Malibi on the weſt, and Athenagarum on the eaſt. The real latitude of Cannoge, by

* The betle is a leaf of a hot aromatic quality, which grows on a kind of creeper, that twiſts itſelf round a ſlender tall tree, planted in regular groves on purpoſe for the betle plant. The Hindoos chew the leaf with the arek nut, and a ſmall quantity of ſhell lime; this mixture, in chewing, produces a reddiſh juice, which they ſpit out. The uſe of betle is almoſt univerſal over India, and not merely confined to Hindoſtan.

obſer-

the beauty and duration of ſome of their dyes, have, even yet, been but barely imi-

tated

---

obſervation, is 27. 3. and the latitudes given by him to Malibi and Athenagarum, are nearly thoſe of Matura and Audia, or Oude. The diſtances of the two former from Palibothra, anſwer minutely to the diſtances of the two latter from Cannoge. I am of opinion that we may place ſome reliance on the poſition given by Ptolemy to Palibothra, for on a compariſon of the latitudes of five different places between the Indus and the Ganges, I find the greateſt difference to be only twelve miles between his and mine.

	Ptolemy.	
Taxilla, the paſs of the Indus, or Attock,	32. 20.	Attock 32. 20.
Conflux of the Hydaſpes and Indus	30. 00.	29. 48.
Malæta	25. 54.	Mirrta 25. 50.
Ardone	30. 12.	Ajodin 30. 15.
Dedalla	30. 32.	Debalpour 30. 24.

But it ſhould not be forgotten that the country between Sinde and Palibothra was the beſt known to the ancients.

Pliny aſſigns for the ſite of Palibothra a ſpot four hundred and twenty-five Roman miles below the conflux of the Ganges and Jomanes, or Jumna; and alſo enumerates particulars of the diſtance between the Indus and the mouth of the Ganges: and although he does not in all caſes correſpond with the map, yet it muſt be allowed that, upon the whole, there is a de-

tated by other nations †. The traveller was enabled to journey through this immenſe

† Hindoſtan has ſcarcely any mines of gold or ſilver, and the vaſt quantities of thoſe metals that were found circulating in coins, and employed in works of luxury and embelliſhment, were chiefly procured in exchange for its manufactures, and were the contributions of other nations. Pliny, in ſpeaking of the route from Egypt to India, ſays, "it is as yet but "little known by the public, notwithſtanding it is of "ſo much importance, as there is not a year that "India does not receive fifty millions of ſeſterces for "its merchandize, on which the traders gain a hun-"dred for one."

---

gree of conſiſtency in his account of the reſpective poſition of places that merits conſideration.

In order to aſcertain Pliny's ſcale, it will be neceſſary to compare his diſtances with mine in ſome known part of the route from the Indus to the mouth of the Ganges; and none appears fitter for this purpoſe, than the ſpace between the part of the Jumna neareſt to the ordinary road into Hindoſtan, and its conflux with the Ganges. This diſtance in Pliny is 623 miles, and on my map 354 geographical miles; ſo that $\frac{57}{100}$ of a geographical mile is equal to a mile of Pliny reduced to horizontal diſtance, or about $\frac{7}{10}$ by the windings of the road, agreeing nearly with a Roman mile, for which it was doubtleſs intended. Taking this for a ſcale,

menſe country with eaſe and ſafety; the public roads were ſhaded with trees to defend

---

ſcale, we ſhall find that about 110 ſuch miles will reach from the aforeſaid part of the Jumna, to the part of the Ganges which is neareſt to that, or about Moonygurry; 286 more will reach to Cannoge, which, being at the junction of the Calini with the Ganges, and a very large place, I am inclined to ſuppoſe that Calinapaxa is meant for it; and 228 more will reach to the conflux of the Ganges and Jumna, that is, to Allahabad. Between the Indus and Hyphaſis (Setlege), the proportions do not hold ſo good. For inſtance, between the Indus and Hydaſpes (Behāt), Pliny reckons 120 miles; which by my map is 135, if Alexander came by Rotas, the ordinary road; for had he taken the road that Timur did, the diſtance would be leſs than 120. Again, between the Hydaſpes and Hyphaſis, Pliny reckons 390 miles, which is only 300 by the uſual route towards Sirhind, and 350, ſuppoſing he went towards the lower parts of the river, which I think highly probable: but as the country between the Hydaſpes and Hyphaſis was the ſeat of war, in which it may be ſuppoſed that Alexander was often led out of the direct road, it cannot be expected that the diſtance of this part ſhould be ſo well aſcertained as the others.

Between Alexander's poſition on the Hyphaſis (Setlege), and the Jomanes (Jumna), Pliny reckons 336 miles, which exceeds the diſtance between thoſe

defend him from the ſcorching ſun; at convenient diſtances buildings were erected for him to repoſe in; a friendly Brahman attended to ſupply his wants; and hoſpitality and the laws held out aſſiſtance and protection to all alike, without prejudice or partiality *.

---

rivers in the line of the great road from Lahore to Delhy about 106 miles; but 336 miles is really the diſtance between the Jumna and that part of the Hyphaſis (or Setlege), below the conflux with the Bea, and which I ſuppoſe to have been Alexander's poſition when he erected his altars.

Pliny ſtates that Palibothra is 425 miles below the conflux of the Ganges and Jumna, and the mouth of the Ganges 638 miles from Palibothra, or 1063 from the conflux. It is true that this diſtance on the map is only 1000 ſuch miles by the road; but we ſhould reflect, that our own ideas of this diſtance did not come nearer the truth after an intercourſe of near two centuries with India, and indeed until the preſent time; for it will be found that Monſieur D'Anville's map of India, publiſhed in 1752, repreſents the diſtance as much ſhort of the truth as Pliny goes beyond it. Maj. RENNEL.

* Sunt et apud Indos, ſtatuti principes qui injurias ab advenis prohibeant. Si qui aegrotantes, conductis medicis curant; defunctoſque ſepeliunt, eorum pecuniâ proximis traditâ. *Diod. Sic. l. 2. cap. 10.*

Their

Their laws being interwoven with their religious doctrines, perhaps threw too great a preponderance on the ſide of the prieſthood; but the evil which this might have occaſioned ſeems, in ſome ſort, to have been rectified by the excluſion of the members of that order from any temporal employments; ſo that while they guarded the people from tyranny, they ſecured to the ſovereign the peaceable obedience of his ſubjects.

The ſciences, being confined to a particular ſet of men, could not take that flight which they have done in countries where they are open to the world at large, and where genius is encouraged and reſpected in whatever ſphere it may appear. The prieſts in Hindoſtan ſeem early to have foreſeen that advancement in knowledge would produce the decline of their ſpiritual authority, and they guarded therefore againſt it with a degree of caution and refinement ſcarcely to be exampled in any other

civiliſed country. Yet, with all the exceptions that can be made, we muſt allow, that their laws and government tended, as much as any others we are acquainted with, to procure peace and happineſs. They were calculated to prevent violence, to promote benevolence and charity, to keep the people united amongſt themſelves, and to hinder their tranquillity from being diſturbed by the introduction of foreign innovations.

We afterwards ſee the empire overrun by a fierce race of men, who, in the beginning of their furious conqueſts, endeavoured, with their country, to ſubdue the minds of the Hindoos. They maſſacred the people *; tortured the prieſts; threw down many of the temples; and, what was ſtill more afflicting, converted ſome of them into places of worſhip for

* Tamerlane ordered about 100,000 Hindoo captives to be put to death at once, which was immediately executed by his cavalry.

their

their prophet*: till, at length, tired with the exertion of cruelties, which they found to be without effect, and guided by their intereſt, which led them to wiſh for tranquillity, they were conſtrained to let a religion and cuſtoms ſubſiſt which they found it impoſſible to deſtroy. But during theſe ſcenes of devaſtation and bloodſhed, the ſciences, being in the ſole poſſeſſion of the prieſts, who had more preſſing cares to attend to, were neglected, and are now almoſt forgotten.

* The temple of Eiſhuar at Benares is now a Mahomedan moſque, and two lofty minarets were erected on it by order of Aurengzebe. Mr. FORSTER.

SKETCH XIII.

Hiſtory and Political State of the preſent native Powers of Hindoſtan.

IN the foregoing ſheets I have endeavoured to make the reader more nearly acquainted with the original inhabitants of Hindoſtan. To give ſome account of its preſent political ſtate is the purport of this ſketch, in which I ſhall only endeavour to preſerve the principal features, without entering into minute particulars. It muſt however be obſerved, that the continual changes to which the powers of India have long been ſubject, and the viciſſitudes that ſtill characteriſe the politics of that country, render the moſt accurate account that can be given of them, only adapted to the period

period for which it may be written: as any plan formed on the ſtate of politics to day, may perhaps be totally inapplicable a year hence.

In approaching India from the North-weſt, before we reach the Attuck *, we paſs through the dominions of Timur Shaw, ſon and ſucceſſor of Ahmed Shaw †, late ſovereign of the Affghans ‡.

Ahmed was deſcended from an illuſtrious family named Seidou Zei, of the tribe of Abdalli. He and his brother Zulfecur Khan, having been taken and confined, by Huſſein Khan, then chief of Kandahar, were releaſed by Nadir Shaw, when he

* The river in general is called by Europeans the Indus, but its proper name in this quarter is the Attuck.

† Commonly known to Europeans by the name of Abdalla.

‡ The Affghans are often called in Hindoſtan by the general name of Duranies: all the country from India to Iran, or Perſia Proper, being called Duran, or, as ſome pronounce it, Turan.

came

came and ſubdued that province, previous to his expedition into Hindoſtan. But as they were thought to have too much influence with their countrymen to be ſafely left amongſt them, they were ſent to Mezenderan. Zulfecur Khan died there; and we find that Ahmed, ſome time after the return of Nadir from India, was intruſted with the command of a body of Affghan cavalry, in the Perſian army. He ſerved his maſter with fidelity, and even attempted to revenge his death; but finding the conſpirators too powerful to be contended with, he went off with his party to his own country. Soon after his arrival at Kandahar, he was hailed chief of the Affghans. His forces quickly increaſed; he was joined by many of the Perſian ſoldiers who had ſerved with him; and in the courſe of a few months, all the countries that had been ceded by the Mogul Emperor to Nadir Shaw, together with ſome neighbouring

bouring parts of Perſia, ſubmitted to his authority.

The diſtracted ſtate of Hindoſtan, at that time, invited him to puſh his conqueſts ſtill further. He therefore croſſed the Attuck, and directing his courſe to the South-eaſt, he plundered the country, and levied contributions to a conſiderable amount. Near Sirhind he was met by the imperial army under the command of the Prince Royal and the Vizier. They fought; but though the latter was killed, the battle was not deciſive, and Ahmed returned to his own dominions.

In another expedition, he conquered all the province of Lahore. In 1755 he again came into India, and, after ſtaying a ſhort while at Lahore, marched to Delhi. It is ſaid, that he was invited thither by the emperor himſelf, who by this deſperate means wiſhed to get rid of the tyranny of his Vizier, Ghazi ul Dien Khan. By ſecret inſtructions therefore from the King,

the Vizier was deſerted in the field by ſome of the principal officers, with a great part of the army, and was obliged to ſurrender himſelf priſoner. But inſtead of loſing his power or life, by his addreſs and preſents he obtained the protection of the conqueror; and the unhappy Allumghire, beſides the reproach of having brought on himſelf and his people the calamities of a foreign invaſion, was obliged to ſubmit to be directed by a ſervant, whom, not having the power or fortitude to diſmiſs, he meanly, but ineffectually, attempted to betray.

Ahmed laid the city under a heavy contribution, which he exacted with the utmoſt rigour. He ſtaid in it about a month, during which time he concluded a marriage between his ſon Timur and the emperor's niece. He then marched againſt the Jauts *, who lately, under their chief Souragemul, had made incurſions towards Delhi, and

* A tribe of Hindoos.

con-

conquered the greateſt part of the province of Agra. They fled at his approach, and ſhut themſelves up in their fortreſſes. But, by an extraordinary march, he ſurpriſed and took the ancient city of Matra, famous as the birth-place of Kriſhna, and ſacred to the Hindoo muſes. He attempted likewiſe to ſurpriſe the town of Agra, which ſtill held out for the emperor, but was repulſed by the governor Fazil Cawn. He had, during this expedition, indulged his troops in every ſpecies of ſavage wantonneſs and cruelty, and now led them towards Delhi. When he approached near the city, the emperor came to meet him; and on his arrival he celebrated his nuptials with Sahibe Zimany, daughter of the emperor Mahomed Shaw, a maiden of exquiſite beauty, whom the unfortunate Allumghire in vain ſolicited for himſelf. He then proceeded to Lahore, and, leaving his ſon Timur in the government of that province, he quitted Hindoſtan.

While

While Ahmed was employed on the ſide of Perſia, young Timur was frequently diſturbed by the Seiks *; but though he had ſufficient force to repulſe theſe, in 1760 he was compelled to fly before an immenſe army of Mahrattas, led by Ragonaut Row, the Paiſhwa's brother, who having come to the northern provinces for the ſake of levying contributions, was invited to invade Lahore by Adina Beg Cawn, a Mogul chief, who was diſaffected to Ahmed's government. The Mahrattas took poſſeſſion of the province, almoſt without any reſiſtance, and Adina Beg was inveſted with the adminiſtration of it. Ragonaut Row then marched back towards Delhi, and, leaving the command of the army to another chief, Jinkou Jee, returned to Poonah. Adina Beg, who appears to have poſſeſſed to his death great activity, courage, and abilities, died ſome months

* A tribe of Hindoos, who profeſs deiſm.

after

after the departure of the Mahrattas, aged upwards of eighty years. Soon after his death, in 1761, Ahmed croſſed the Attuck with a powerful army, and eaſily recovered his former poſſeſſions. In the mean time, the Mahratta army had attacked ſome of the Rohilla chiefs, who applied to Ahmed for protection. Advice had been received in the North, that another army was coming thither from Poonah; and it was reported that the views of the Mahrattas were now directed to the reduction of all the Mahomedan princes in Hindoſtan. Ahmed was therefore invited by Sujah ul Dowla, Nabob of Oud, and by moſt of the northern Mahomedan chiefs, to put himſelf at the head of a league propoſed to be formed by them for the defence of their territories and religion. He ſaw the neceſſity of reſiſting the Mahratta power, and effectually checking their pretenſions. The opportunity was favourable, as the common danger which threatened the con-

fede-

federates, rendered their fidelity towards each other more to be relied upon. He likewiſe either felt, or affected to be actuated by, a degree of devout zeal, and, having acceded to the propoſal, he marched towards the enemy. Jinkou Jee advanced to meet him. The armies encountered; the battle was obſtinate, but Ahmed at laſt obtained a complete victory.

The army that was ſent from Poonah, was commanded by Sadaſhavarow, couſin to the Paiſhwa; a chief of much perſonal courage, but who never had been tried in the conduct of any great or difficult enterprize. He came to Agra; from thence to Delhi; and, being joined by parties of his countrymen as he went along, his army is ſaid to have amounted to about 120,000 horſe, beſides infantry and artillery. From thence he directed his courſe towards Sirhinde; while Ahmed, who had been joined by the Rohilla chiefs, by Sujah ul Dowla, and by Ahmed Khan Bunguiſh,

Bunguiſh, chief of Ferokhabad, was encamped on the other ſide of the Jumna, almoſt oppoſite to Kangipara. Having unexpectedly croſſed the river, with a view of getting behind the Mahrattas, they precipitately fell back to Paniput, whither the combined army cloſely followed them. Here, according to the notions of ſome of the Hindoos, "Sadaſhavarow, being miſ-led by his own evil genius,"—but rather being over-awed by the ſuperior one of Ahmed, inſtead of giving battle before the whole of the combined army came up, halted, and formed an extenſive camp, defended by batteries and intrenchments. Ahmed allowed him to proceed undiſturbed; but loſt no time in taking meaſures to prevent him from getting any ſupplies, or to force him to fight under many diſadvantages to obtain them. Convoys of proviſions that were coming to the Mahratta army were cut off; attacks that were made on the Mahomedan poſts were repulſed; the

proviſions that were brought with the army were, notwithſtanding a ſevere economy, almoſt entirely conſumed, and the wailings produced by famine and diſeaſe were to be heard in every quarter of the encampment. Sadaſhavarow, after having remained in this inactive ſtate nearly thirty days, at laſt reſolved, or rather was compelled, to throw all the mighty projects of his ſtate on the fate of a general battle. He led out every one who was yet capable of bearing arms; but his troops were waſted by want, and diſcouraged by confinement, whilſt thoſe of the enemy were in their uſual vigour, and already conſidered themſelves victors over a foe, whom they had ſo long ſhut up. Yet the Mahrattas made wonderful efforts of courage; the victory was long doubtful, but at laſt decided in favour of the Mahomedans, by Ahmed Khan Bunguiſh vigorouſly attacking their left flank with a freſh body of well-choſen cavalry. This battle was one of the moſt bloody

that ever embrued the plains of Hindoſtan. Above 50,000 Mahrattas are ſuppoſed to have fallen in the field, together with the Paiſhwa's eldeſt ſon Biſſwaſs Row, and eighty leaders of diſtinction. Sadaſhavarow, after having animated his troops by his words and example, though he ſaw the battle was loſt, refuſed to fly; and when preſſed by thoſe who were near him, he puſhed his horſe amongſt the enemy, and fell, covered with wounds *. The purſuit laſted ſeveral days, and this immenſe army, deſtined to conquer king-

* It was once reported, that he had eſcaped, and got back to Poonah; but was immediately arreſted by order of the Paiſhwa, and ſent to the fort of Pourendher, where he remained in ſecret confinement. An impoſtor even appeared in Bengal, who called himſelf Sadaſhavarow, but the fraud was ſoon detected by thoſe who had known him. There is no doubt, that his death happened as above related; and Colonel Polier was ſhewn the ſpot where his body was burnt by ſome Hindoos the day after the battle. He is ſometimes called the Baw. He was ſon of Chumna Jee Appah, ſecond ſon of the firſt Paiſhwa Biſſonat Balaſee.

doms, and which had juſtly alarmed all the Mahomedans of the northern provinces, totally diſappeared. Ahmed afterwards marched to Delhi, and wherever he went was hailed by thoſe of his own religion, as the deliverer of the faithful. From thence he directed his courſe back to Lahore, and, having appointed perſons to govern and manage his poſſeſſions in India, he returned to the north.

In the latter end of 1762, he again croſſed the Attuck, in order to attack the Seiks, whoſe power having greatly increaſed, their incurſions had become more frequent and dangerous. But his intention ſeems rather to have been to extirpate than to conquer them. He defeated their army, compoſed of the troops of their different chiefs; and forced them to take refuge within their woods and ſtrong holds. All who were taken were put to death; and having ſet a price on the heads of all thoſe who profeſſed their tenets, it is ſaid that heaps

heaps of them were frequently to be ſeen piled up in the market places of the principal towns. Hearing that they had aſſembled in conſiderable numbers to celebrate an annual feſtival at Anbertſer, he endeavoured to ſurpriſe them. But their chiefs had marched thither with all their force, and were prepared to receive him. He nevertheleſs attacked them with great impetuoſity. During the battle, there happened an eclipſe of the ſun, which, whilſt interpreted as a favourable omen by the Seiks, diſmayed the Mahomedans. Ahmed, after a bloody conflict, was obliged to retreat with precipitation. Soon after, he retired to his northern dominions; but returning the year following, retook ſeveral places that had been loſt during his abſence, and drove the Seiks from the open country. But as ſoon as he quitted Hindoſtan, they again came forth; and this kind of warfare ſeems to have been often repeated.

Ahmed, after being long afflicted with an ulcer in his face, died on the 15th of July 1773, at Kohtoba, a place ſituated amongſt the mountains of Kandahar, whither he had retired for the ſake of coolneſs. He was ſucceeded by his ſon Timur, who, though repreſented as a man of no mean abilities, does not ſeem to poſſeſs the active and enterpriſing genius of his father. His dominions to the north of the Attuck, form a very extenſive kingdom, inhabited by a hardy and warlike people; but he has loſt all that he poſſeſſed in Hindoſtan, except the province of Kaſhmire.

On croſſing the Attuck, we enter the territories of the Seiks *, a people who owe their religious origin to a Hindoo, named Nanuck, of the Khatry or Rajah caſt. His father, Baba Caloo, poſſeſſed a ſmall diſtrict in the province of Lahore, named Telvandi, where Nanuck was born in the

* Seik is ſaid to mean diſciple.

year

year of Chriſt 1470. Many ſtories are told of wonderful indications given by him, in his infancy, of uncommon wiſdom and ſagacity. He ſeems to have poſſeſſed ſtrong powers, but which received no further cultivation beyond the uſual education of the young men of his caſt, conſiſting in little more than learning reading, writing, and arithmetic; and hearing the Shaſtras, or diſſertations on the laws and religion of their country.

According to the cuſtom of the Hindoos, he was married in his early years to one of his own tribe, by whom he had two ſons.

It appears that he ſoon became an admirer of the Narganey * worſhip, and uſed to declaim againſt the folly of idols, and the impiety of offering adoration to any but the Supreme Being.

Having often expreſſed a deſire to travel, at the age of about twenty-five years, he

* See page 183.

quitted his family, and viſited Bengal and moſt of the eaſtern provinces of Hindoſtan. In a ſecond excurſion he went to the ſouth, it is ſaid, as far as the iſland of Ceyloan: and in a third, he went into Perſia and Arabia. Thoſe different journies ſeem to have taken up about fifteen years. But on his return from the third, he declared his intention of not quitting his native country any more; and having expreſſed a wiſh of fixing his retreat on the border of ſome river, at a diſtance from any town, the Rajah of Calanore, who had become one of his diſciples, granted him a piece of land on the banks of the Ravy, about eighty miles north-eaſtward from the city of Lahore. Here Nanuck eſtabliſhed his abode for the reſt of his days, in a convenient dwelling that was erected by the Rajah's care: and as he choſe to be free from the cares of this world, his wife and children dwelt at Calanore, coming occaſionally to viſit him. Having acquired

great

great reputation for knowledge, wiſdom, and piety, perſons of all perſuaſions went to ſee him, and the Seiks ſay, that in his preſence they forget that there was any religion but one. He died about the age of ſeventy. The place of his abode was called Kartarpour, but ſince his death it has been named Dihra Daira, or the place of worſhip.

His eldeſt ſon, Serik-chund, was the founder of a ſet of devotees, named Nanuck Shoiy. The ſecond, called Letchimidan, married and had ſeveral children. On account of the oppreſſions of the Mahomedan governors, he altogether forſook Telvandy, the eſtate of his anceſtors, and ſettled at Kartarpour, which is ſtill in the poſſeſſion of his deſcendants. But though they are reſpected by the Seiks, as being the poſterity of Nanuck, yet they are not held in any ſacred veneration, nor conſidered as the heads of their religion or tribe.

Nanuck,

Nanuck, when on his death-bed, paſſing by his children and relations, named as his ſucceſſor to teach his doctrine a favourite diſciple, named Lhina, but whom he then called Angud, which is ſaid to ſignify ſimilar. Angud was likewiſe of the Khatry caſt, and of a reſpectable family in the ſame province where Nanuck was born. To him he entruſted the care of collecting his precepts, which he accordingly did, in a work called Pothy, or the book: and in another work, called Jenum Sakky, he gave a hiſtory of Nanuck's life. Theſe are written in the Punjab dialect, but in a particular character called Gour Mouekty, ſaid to have been invented by Nanuck himſelf, for the purpoſe of writing his doctrines*.

Angud, following the example of Nanuck, named to ſucceed him as Gourou, or holy maſter, his diſciple Amerdoſs; and

* Colonel Polier.

this

this mode seems to have been practised, as long as the custom of obeying one supreme chief was observed.

The Seiks appear to have lived for many years in perfect peace with the rest of mankind; and, being inoffensive in their manners, obtained the protection and good-will of the Mahomedan court. During this time, the number of their disciples constantly increased; their possessions were considerably extended, some of the neighbouring Rajahs were converted to their religion, and some woody and uncultivated lands were granted to them by the government. But in proportion as their power augmented, they seem to have quitted their meek and humble character, and at last, instead of appearing as suppliants, stood forth in arms. The first military leader of distinction we hear of was Taigh. The next was the tenth and last Gourou, Govand Sing, who, after being engaged in hostilities against the government, made his

his peace, and even attended the emperor Bahauder Shaw in perſon. From ſome private motive of reſentment he was aſſaſſinated by a Petan ſoldier, though the Seiks were not without ſuſpicion, that he was killed by the ſecret order of the emperor. Having neglected to name a ſucceſſor, or, as ſome ſay, declined it out of reſpect to a prophecy that there would only be ten Gourous, the Seiks choſe for their chief a perſon named Banda. Being of a bold and active diſpoſition, he ſoon began to make incurſions into the neighbouring countries, and maintained a depredatory war with the Soubadar of Lahore for ſeveral years. He was at laſt ſurpriſed and taken, and with his family and many of his countrymen ſent to Delhi, where they were put to an ignominious death. The blood that was ſpilt on that occaſion, ſealed that revenge which the Seiks then ſwore, and the invincible averſion they have ever ſince manifeſted to the Mahomedans. They continued

tinued their warfare with the Mogul government for ſome time, with various ſucceſs; but taking advantage of the inteſtine troubles which ſucceeded the invaſion of Nadir Shaw, they ſubdued ſeveral diſtricts. Wherever they conquered, they threw down the moſques; and as they admitted proſelytes to their religion, all were obliged to quit their country who did not chooſe to embrace their doctrine.

Having, as already related, drawn on themſelves the vengeance of Ahmed Shaw, he attacked them with his uſual vigour. They were now under ſeveral chiefs, ſome of them deſcendants of their Gourous, and others of Hindoo nobles, who had adopted their faith, and united themſelves with the nation. The war with the Affghans laſted ſeveral years, during which the Seiks retired into ſtrong holds, or acted offenſively in the field, according as they found themſelves in force. But in the end they entirely expelled theſe northern invaders; and

not

not only conquered all the extenſive province of Lahore, but are now in poſſeſſion of the greateſt part of Moultan, and ſeveral diſtricts towards Delhi, including in their territories the whole of that rich country, called the Panjab *.

Nanuck having ſtripped the religion of Brimha of its mythology, the Seiks adore God alone, without image or intermediation; and though they venerate the memory of their founder, as well as of ſome of their Gourous, whoſe names they often repeat, yet they neither offer them divine worſhip, nor apply to them to intercede in their behalf.

They eat any ſort of meat, excepting beef; retaining the ſame regard for the ox as the other Hindoos, and probably from the ſame cauſe, its utility. But the meat

* A tract of country ſo named, on account of five rivers, which, deſcending from the northern mountains, encloſe and interſect it. They afterwards run into the Sinde or Indus.

which

which is very generally eaten, is pork; perhaps, becauſe forbidden to the Mahomedans.

Blue, which is generally conſidered as an inauſpicious colour by the Hindoos, diſtinguiſhes the dreſs of the Seiks; as if Nanuck meant to ſhow by this, the weakneſs and abſurdity of ſuperſtitious prejudices. Their dreſs commonly conſiſts in blue trowſers of cotton cloth; a ſort of plaid generally checkered with blue, which is thrown over the right ſhoulder, and a blue turban.

The national government is compoſed of an aſſembly of their different chiefs, but who individually are independent of each other, and maſters of their reſpective territories. In this aſſembly every thing that regards the ſafety of the ſtate, the quota of troops to be furniſhed by each chief in time of war, the operations of their armies, and the choice of a perſon to command them, is agitated; and reſolved on by the plurality of

of voices. This aſſembly meets annually, or as occaſion may require, at Anbertſer, a place held in a kind of religious veneration, where there is a large tank, which is ſaid to be beautifully ornamented, lined with granit, and ſurrounded with buildings.

The whole force of the different chiefs collectively may amount to about two hundred thouſand horſe. But they ſeldom can be brought to act in concert, unleſs the nation be threatened with general danger; in which caſe they never fail to unite.

Beſides a ſabre, moſt of their ſoldiers carry a matchlock gun, which ſeems a very uncouth weapon for a horſeman, but in the uſe of it they are extremely expert, and are in general excellent markſmen. It carries a larger ball than an Engliſh muſket to a greater diſtance; and is often employed by them with ſucceſs before the enemy be near enough to uſe the ſword.

They are naturally a ſtrong race of men, and, by their hardy manner of living, are capable

capable of enduring much fatigue. In the field, none but the principal officers have tents, and theſe extremely ſmall, ſo that they may be ſtruck and tranſported with quickneſs and facility. In cold weather the ſoldier wraps himſelf, in the night, in a coarſe blanket, which, when he marches, is folded and carried on his horſe.

Of late years almoſt all the neighbouring countries have been laid under contributions by them; and, to avoid their incurſions, ſeveral petty chiefs have conſented to pay them a ſmall annual tribute, and put themſelves under their protection.

Their country is well cultivated; full of inhabitants, and abounds with cattle. The horſes of Lahore are ſuppoſed to be much ſuperior to thoſe bred in any other part of Hindoſtan *.

It

* The country of Lahore being thought favourable for breeding horſes, and producing plenty of excellent forage, ſtuds were eſtabliſhed at different places on ac-

It is ſaid, that they have a ſort of ſuperſtitious reſpect for their ſword. It was by it they obtained their independence and power; and by it they preſerve them. A Seik, though in other reſpects infinitely leſs ſcrupulous than any other Hindoo, before he will eat with any one of another religion, draws his ſword, and paſſing it over the victuals, repeats ſome words of prayer, after which he will freely partake of them *.

Contrary to the practice of all the other inhabitants of Hindoſtan, they have an averſion to ſmoaking tobacco. But many of the people ſmoak and chew bang, ſo as ſometimes to produce a degree of intoxication †.

---

count of the Mogul emperor. Perſian and Arabian ſtallions were ſent to them, and there was a fixed order at all the royal ſtables, to ſend to the ſtuds in Lahore all ſuch Arabian and Perſian horſes as by any accident ſhould be rendered unfit for mounting. Hence perhaps it aroſe, that the preſent breed of horſes there, is ſuperior to the horſes that are bred in the other provinces.

* Mr. Stuart.

† Colonel Polier.

After

After leaving the Seiks, we come to the provinces of Delhi *, which in the courſe of a few years have had a variety of maſters; but ſcarce at any period during that time can they be ſaid to have been under the authority of the ſovereign. The laſt ſole governor of almoſt all of them was Nadjiff Khan, under the title of generaliſſimo of the emperor. He was a native of Perſia, of noble birth, whoſe ſiſter married Mirza Mohſieu Ally Khan, brother to Seiffdar Jung, the father of the late Nabob of Oude, Suja ul Dowla. After the death of Seiffdar Jung and his brother Mirza Mohſieu, Nadjiff was involved in the ruin of Mahomed Kouly Khan, the ſon of Mirza, and couſin of Sujah ul Dowla. He then went to Caſſim Ally Khan, Nabob of Bengal, who being expelled by the Engliſh, Nadjiff retired with a party of horſe to Bundelcund, into the ſervice of

* See the Map of Hindoſtan by Major Rennell.

Rajah Coman Sing. He afterwards joined the Engliſh, who were at war with Sujah Dowla, ſoon after the defeat of the latter near Benares. When the emperor Shaw Allum reſolved to quit Eliabad, and return to Delhi, Nadjiff Khan accompanied him, and afterwards was named his chief general. A body of Engliſh ſeapoys, who had been allowed to go with the emperor, were put under his command, and with theſe and other troops, which, as his means increaſed, he took into his ſervice, he ſubdued the countries near Delhi, and almoſt the whole poſſeſſions of the Jauts, taking from them Agra, their capital Dieg, and moſt of their principal places. But though theſe conqueſts were atchieved in the name of the ſovereign, he benefited little by them; and the perſon who ſtiled himſelf his ſlave was in reality his maſter. Nadjiff Khan died in 1782, and a ſcene of continual anarchy and warfare has prevailed in thoſe countries ever ſince.

On

On quitting the provinces of Delhi, our attention is drawn to the poſſeſſions of ſeveral Hindoo chiefs that are contiguous to each other, and now acknowledge no ſuperior. The principal of theſe are the Rajahs of Joinagur, or Jaypoor; Joadpoor, or Marwar; Oudiapoor, or Chitore; and Jeſalmire. The conſtitution of thoſe countries is feudal; the rents are low; but every village is obliged to furniſh a certain number of horſemen, and at the ſhorteſt warning. The people are hardy, brave, and extremely attached to their reſpective chiefs. The forces of thoſe Rajahs may amount together to about 150,000 horſemen, but, like moſt neighbouring powers, they have jealouſies and private piques, which have more influence over their minds, than the conſideration of the permanent ſecurity and independence which they might eſtabliſh by being united.

The Rajah of Jaypoor was anciently called Rajah of Anbire, a place much

celebrated, but all that now remains of it is only a fort on a hill, near the modern town of Jaypoor *.

Chitore was likewiſe greatly renowned for its antiquity and riches; but having been taken and pillaged by Acbar, and again by Aurengzebe, the Rajah now reſides at Oudiapoor.

The Jauts were a tribe or race of people in the northern provinces of Hindoſtan, whoſe profeſſion was agriculture; and were formed into a nation, only about forty years ago, by Tackou Souragemul, proprietor of a diſtrict of no great extent or value. He made himſelf maſter of all the countries that were dependent on Agra,

* The modern town of Jaypoor is incloſed with a ſtrong wall, with four great gates, from whence proceed as many broad ſtreets, which meet in the centre of the town. It is thereby divided into four quarters of the ſame ſize: the diſtance from one gate to that oppoſite to it, is about two Engliſh miles. Thoſe ſtreets have rows of trees on each ſide of them, and the houſes, which are in general of three ſtories, are built in a regular line. Mr. STUART.

and

and ultimately of the town itſelf, and many other important places; but fell in battle with the Rohilla chief Nadjib ul Dowla in the year 1763. He was ſucceeded by his ſon Jewar Sing, who was ſecretly murdered in 1768. Jewar was ſucceeded by Rutten Sing, who did not eſcape ſuſpicion of having been acceſſary to his brother's murder, and fell himſelf by the hand of a low aſſaſſin, whom he had threatened with death *. Rutten Sing left an infant ſon, named

* He had given ſeveral ſums of money to a ſtranger, unknown to any one about his court, who pretended to be a tranſmuter of metals. Growing impatient, or beginning to perceive he had been duped, Rutten Sing ordered him to ſhow him all his proceſs; and, to prevent him from getting away, put a guard over his perſon. The man, finding he could not evade the command, conſented to obey; but, on account of the importance of the ſecret, requeſted that no other perſon ſhould be preſent. They accordingly retired into a room by themſelves. The man knew that nothing was to be expected from Rutten Sing's clemency, who was of a violent and cruel temper. He therefore affected to take great pains to explain the ſecrets of his

named Kairy Sing, during whoſe minority, internal commotions, occaſioned by conteſts for the regency, principally contributed to the ſucceſs of Nadjiff Khan, with whom the Jauts were then at war. Kairy Sing dying, was ſucceeded by his uncle Tackou Ranjid Sing, the preſent Rajah, who only poſſeſſes Bartpoor, a place of great ſtrength, with a ſmall diſtrict round it. But it is ſaid that the Jauts have lately ſhewn a diſpoſition to war, and may ſoon again be in a condition to recover their former territories.

The power which comes next under our notice, and indeed the moſt conſiderable of all the native powers of Hindoſtan,

art, and, whilſt he was looking attentively into a crucible, expecting to ſee the metal change its colour, he plunged a poignard into his heart. Taking his ring from his finger, he went out, ſhut the door, and ſhewing the ring to the guards, ſaid it was the Rajah's order, that none ſhould enter the room until he returned. By this means he made his eſcape, and got to Delhi, where he related what had happened, making a merit of it with the Mahomedans.

is the Mahratta, whoſe territories border upon ſeveral of thoſe we have already mentioned. Europeans became firſt acquainted with the Mahrattas in their original country on the coaſt of Malabar.

The firſt perſon upon record, who diſtinguiſhed himſelf as an active chief of this nation, was Seeva, or Seeva-jee, who, as the Mahrattas now pretend, was deſcended from the family of the ancient Hindoo emperors. His father was lord of a ſmall diſtrict, for which he paid tribute to the Mahomedan king of Viziapoor. For ſome reaſon, with which we are unacquainted, he was arreſted by an order from that court, and died in confinement. His ſon Seeva-jee took arms, and, being liberal, active, and brave, was ſoon joined by numbers of his countrymen. The king of Viziapoor died ſhortly after the rebellion began. Seeva-jee made himſelf maſter of ſeveral important places, together with a con-

a conſiderable tract of country, which were afterwards regularly ceded to him by the Queen Regent *. Many petty Hindoo chiefs put themſelves under his protection; and to employ his army, which was now very numerous, he invaded the dominions of the Mogul emperor.

After having maintained a long war with Aurengzebe, he was at laſt taken priſoner, carried to Delhi, and kept in cloſe confinement. He however found means to eſcape, got back to his capital Satarah, and, immediately collecting his forces, renewed hoſtilities with vigour. Aurengzebe was then far advanced in life, and being tired of a war, which he ſaw no proſpect of bringing to a happy concluſion, was glad to come to an accommodation with ſo troubleſome an enemy. The Mahrattas pretend, that, on this occaſion, he gave them a *coule*, or written agree-

* Tavernier mentions his having ſeen the Regent Queen.

ment,

ment, by which he granted to them the *chout*, or 10 per cent. on all the revenues of the Deckan, which has often ſerved as a pretence to invade the territories, and to levy contributions upon the different nabobs of the ſouthern provinces.

Seeva-jee was ſucceeded by his ſon, Rajah Sahou, who conſiderably extended the Mahratta dominions. When Rajah Sahou grew old and infirm, and the fatigues of government began to preſs heavy upon him, he appointed Biſſonat Balajee, a Brahman born at Gokum, and leader of about twenty-five thouſand horſe, to the office of Paiſhwa, or vice-gerent.

Rajah Sahou died without iſſue, but left nephews by his brother. The courage and wiſdom of Balajee had gained him, during the latter years of the old Rajah, the affection and eſteem of all the nation. But, under an appearance of modeſty and ſelf-denial, his prevailing paſſion was ambition;

and the ſentiments of gratitude and loyalty were abſorbed in the deſire to command. He made uſe of the influence he had acquired under his benefactor, ſo firmly to eſtabliſh his own power, that he not only retained the high office of Paiſhwa during his life, but tranſmitted it to his poſterity. The Mahrattas, gradually forgetting a prince they knew nothing of, became accuſtomed to obey his vicegerent only: yet a certain reſpect for the royal race, or the dread of the conſequence of violating the ſtrong prejudice which the nation ſtill retain in favour of the family of its founder, have ſerved, perhaps, to preſerve it; and the deſcendants of Rajah's Sahou's nephews yet exiſt, but are kept in captivity in the palace at Sattarah. The eldeſt is ſtiled Ram Rajah, or ſovereign; his name is always on the ſeal and coin of the Mahratta ſtate; but his perſon is unknown, except to thoſe who immediately ſurround him; and as he neither poſſeſſes authority

nor

nor any influence in public affairs, we ſhall leave him in his palace, where he is allowed to divert himſelf with trivial amuſements, and return to thoſe who exerciſe the powers, though they have not yet aſſumed the titles of royalty.

Biſſonat Balajee was ſucceeded as Paiſhwa by his eldeſt ſon, Balajee Row, who left three ſons, the eldeſt of whom, Balajee Pundit, ſometimes called Nanah Pundit, ſucceeded him. The two others were Rogobah, or Ragonat Row, and Shamſheer Row.

Balajee Pundit had alſo three ſons, Biſſwas Row, who was killed in the famous battle with Ahmed Shaw; Mahadava Row, who was Paiſhwa twelve years; and Narrain Row, who ſucceeded him.

During the latter part of the life of Mahadava Row, his uncle Rogobah was confined to the palace at Poonah, for reaſons we are unacquainted with. Mahadava Row died without iſſue; and upon the

the acceſſion of Narrain his brother, a youth of about nineteen years of age, Rogobah applied for his releaſe, but in vain. He is therefore ſuſpected of having entered into a conſpiracy with two officers in his nephew's ſervice, Somair Jing and Yuſuph Gardie, in order to procure that by force, which he could not obtain by intreaty. The correſpondence between the conſpirators was carried on with ſo much ſecrecy, that the court had not the leaſt intimation or ſuſpicion of their deſign, till every avenue leading to the palace had been ſecured, and the whole building ſurrounded by the troops under the command of thoſe two officers. It is ſaid, that on the firſt alarm, Narrain Row, ſuſpecting his uncle, threw himſelf at his feet, and implored his protection:——"You are my "uncle," ſaid he, "ſpare the blood of your "own family, and take poſſeſſion of a "government, which I am willing to re-"ſign to you."

Somair

Somair and Yuſuph entered the room whilſt the young Paiſhwa was in this ſuppliant poſture. Rogobah, with apparent ſurpriſe and anger, ordered them to withdraw; but as they either knew him not to be ſincere, or thought they had proceeded too far to retreat, they ſtabbed Narrain with their poignards, whilſt he clung to his uncle's knees.

The office of Paiſhwa being now vacant, the chiefs of the nation then at Poonah were aſſembled, and Rogobah being the only ſurvivor of the family of Biſſonat Balajee, to whoſe memory the Mahrattas in thoſe parts are enthuſiaſtically attached, he was named to fill it. Being naturally of a warlike temper, he reſolved to undertake ſome foreign expedition; for beſides gratifying his paſſion for the field, he probably hoped, by the ſplendour of his exploits, to draw off the attention of the public from inquiring into the late cataſtrophe.

A pre-

A pretence for war was not difficult to be found. He renewed the claim of his nation to the chout, and marched his army towards Hydrobad, the capital of the Nizam. The vigour of his meaſures procured him an accommodation of his demand; and he was proceeding to enforce a ſimilar one upon the Carnatic, when he received intelligence, that obliged him to return immediately to Poonah.

Although the Mahratta chiefs had acknowledged Rogobah as Paiſhwa, yet they, and the people in general, were much diſſatisfied with his conduct. The murderers of Narrain Row had not only eſcaped puniſhment, but, it was reported, had been handſomely rewarded. The crime was unexampled, and the perpetrators of it were beheld with uncommon horror and deteſtation. The Paiſhwa had hitherto ſo fully poſſeſſed the love of the people, that, till then, guards were con-

ſidered

ſidered as unneceſſary about the perſon of a man, whoſe character rendered him inviolable. Every one therefore had free acceſs to his palace, and he relied with confidence for his ſafety upon the affections of thoſe who approached him.

Theſe reflections operated powerfully upon the minds of the Mahrattas. To uſe an expreſſion of one of their writers—the bloody poignards of the conſpirators were conſtantly before their eyes; but perhaps no violent conſequences would have enſued, had it not been diſcovered, ſoon after the departure of Rogobah from Poonah, that the widow of Narrain Row, Ganga Baee, was pregnant. This determined their wavering reſolutions. Frequent conſultations were held among the principal men then in the capital, and it was finally reſolved to abjure the allegiance they had ſworn to Rogobah, and declare the child, yet unborn, to be the legal ſucceſſor of the late Paiſhwa.

A council of regency was immediately appointed to govern the country until the child ſhould become of age; and it was agreed to reſerve their deliberations, in caſe it ſhould prove a female, or ſhould die, till the event ſhould render them neceſſary. They who principally conducted theſe meaſures, and whoſe names will on that account be remembered in the hiſtory of Hindoſtan, were Sackharam Babou, and Balajee Pundit, called alſo Nanah Pher Nevees, from his having been long the principal ſecretary of the Mahratta ſtate. Nine other Mahratta leaders approved of the meaſures, and ſwore to maintain them.

As the firſt ſtep towards the execution of their plan, the widow of Narrain Row was conveyed to Poorendher, a fort of great ſtrength, ſituated on a high mountain, about twenty-five miles from Poonah. As ſoon as Rogobah received intelligence of this revolution, he quitted his deſign upon the Carnatic, and haſtily returned towards the capital.

capital. But diſcontent had already infected his troops; ſome of the chiefs retired to their eſtates, and others joined the ſtandard of the regents. He however riſked a battle with an army of the revolters, commanded by Trimbec Row, in which the latter was ſlain; but, though he obtained the victory, the ſtrength of the confederates daily encreaſed, while his own troops were diminiſhed by continual deſertions. He therefore found it neceſſary to retire to Ugein, and to ſolicit the aſſiſtance of the Mahratta chiefs Sindia and Holkar; but meeting with a refuſal, he went to Surat and applied for ſuccour to the Engliſh.

Rogobah's ſucceſs in this application was the cauſe of two wars with the Mahratta ſtate, which, after much waſte of blood and treaſure, we were obliged to conclude by relinquiſhing his claim, and acknowledging as legal Paiſhwa, the ſon of Narrain Row, who was born about ſeven months after the death of his father.

The territories of the Mahrattas are computed to extend about one thouſand Britiſh miles in length and ſeven hundred in breadth *. They are governed by a number of ſeparate chiefs, all of whom acknowledge the Ram Rajah as their ſovereign, and all, except Moodajee Boonſalah, own the Paiſhwa as his vicegerent.

The capital and reſidence of the ſovereign was Sattarah; but the Paiſhwa generally reſides at Poonah, about one degree ſouth-eaſt from the former place, and a hundred miles diſtant from Bombay. The country immediately ſubject to the Paiſhwa, including all the hereditary territories of the Ram Rajah, as left by Rajah Sahou, extends along the coaſt, nearly from Goa to Cambay; on the ſouth it borders on poſſeſſions of Tippoo Saib; eaſtward on thoſe of the Nizam, and of the Mahratta Rajah of Berar; and towards the north, on

* Major Rennel.

thoſe

thoſe of the Mahratta chiefs Sindia and Holkar.

Moodajee Boonſalah, Rajah of Berar, poſſeſſes, beſides Berar, the greateſt part of Orixa. Including the countries that are tributary to him, his dominions extend about ſix hundred miles from eaſt to weſt, and two hundred and fifty from north to ſouth *. The eaſtern part of Orixa runs along the ſea coaſt for about one hundred and fifty miles, and divides the Engliſh poſſeſſions in Bengal from thoſe commonly called the Northern Circars. Towards the weſt, his territories border on thoſe of the Paiſhwa; towards the ſouth, on thoſe of the Nizam, of Mahomet Hyat, a Patan Chief, of Nizam Shaw, and of Ajid Sing. Nagapour, the preſent reſidence of the Rajah, is ſituated about mid-way between Calcutta and Bombay.

* Major Rennel.

This prince being deſcended from the line of the Ram Rajah, eyes the power of the Paiſhwa, by whom a branch of his family is kept in ignominious confinement, with ill-will; has often refuſed to ſupport his meaſures; and, on ſome occaſions, has even ſeemed inclined to act againſt him.

Next to Moodajee, in point of importance, muſt be ranked Madajee Sindia, a bold and aſpiring chief, who poſſeſſes the greateſt part of the extenſive ſoubadary, or government of Malva, together with part of the province of Candeiſh. The remainder is under the dominion of Holkar. Both he and Sindia pretend to be deſcended from the ancient kings of Malva. Sindia reſides chiefly at Ugein, near the city of Mundu, once the capital of theſe kings; and Holkar at Indoor, a town little more than thirty miles weſt of it. The dominions of theſe, and of ſome chiefs of leſs conſequence, extend as far as the river Jumna.

The

The meaſures purſued by the Mahrattas for ſome years, left little room to doubt that they aſpired at the ſovereignty of all Hindoſtan, or at leaſt at the expulſion of the Mahomedan princes: and, in the courſe of their proſperity, ſome of their chiefs were ſo imprudent as to avow ſuch an intention. But the loſs of the battle of Paniput, their frequent defeats by the Engliſh, and their late internal diviſions, have affected their ſtrength as a nation, ſullied their renown as warriors, and moderated their views of conqueſt.

If we except the late expedition towards the north of India, they ſeem for the preſent to be confined within the limits of their own dominions. But ſhould any unforeſeen accident invite them to come forth, they will always be ready to embrace the opportunity. Their reſources are very conſiderable. The troops and vaſſals of the different chiefs are in conſtant readineſs to follow their leaders; and moſt of theſe

will eaſily concur with the Paiſhwa in any project by which the Mahratta power may be extended.

The ſtrength of a Mahratta army conſiſts chiefly in cavalry. Both horſe and rider are capable of enduring as great a degree of fatigue as any of which we have authentic accounts; and our aſtoniſhment is naturally excited, when we conſider the climate in which they act. Bodies of fifty or ſixty thouſand horſe have been known to march for many days ſucceſſively at the rate of about fifty miles a day. I have even heard of forced marches exceeding that diſtance; and it very ſeldom happens that any are left behind.

The Mahratta country abounds more in horſes than almoſt any other in Hindoſtan, and produces a very fine breed called the Bheemerteddy horſe *. Theſe are very high-

* In every province there are conſiderable ſtuds, which belong to the Paiſhwa and the different chiefs. There

high-priced, and conſequently are only purchaſed by perſons of wealth and diſtinction. But the common Mahratta horſe uſed in war is a lean ill-looking animal, large boned, and commonly from fourteen to fourteen and a half hands high. The only weapon uſed by horſemen is a ſabre, on the choice and temper of which they beſtow great pains and judgment. They learn the uſe of it, and a dexterity in riding, from their infancy: and ſo very expert are they in the management of their horſe and their ſword, that I am perſuaded the beſt exerciſed European huſſar *ſingly* would not be more than a match for an experienced Mahratta horſe-man.

Their dreſs, in time of war, conſiſts, inſtead of the jama *, in a quilted jacket of

---

There are alſo many *jundis*, or large herds of horſes, belonging to individuals, who ſend ſuch as they have no occaſion for, to feed in the open plains.

* See page 284.

cotton

cotton cloth*, that deſcends half way down their thighs, and in a thin linen veſt, which is worn under the jacket, and ſits cloſe to the body. The jacket is taken off when its warmth proves inconvenient. Their thighs and legs are covered with a kind of trowſers, and the head with a broad turban, which, deſcending behind nearly as low as their ſhoulders, defends the head and neck both from the heat of the ſun and the ſword of the enemy.

The neceſſary food for the rider and horſe, in caſe of emergency, is contained in a ſmall bag, tied tight upon the ſaddle. The food of the rider conſiſts in a few cakes, already baked, a ſmall quantity of flour or rice, and ſome ſalt and ſpices: that of the horſe, of a kind of black peas called *gram*, and balls made of the flour of theſe peas,

* This quilted cotton jacket is perhaps a better defence againſt the edge of the ſword than any other light military dreſs that could be contrived.

mixed with ghee *, garlick, and hot ſpices. Theſe balls are given by way of a cordial, to reſtore the vigour of the horſes after extraordinary fatigue; and it is ſaid that a ſmall quantity of *bang* is ſometimes added, a drug that poſſeſſes a quality of exhilarating the ſpirits, and produces a degree of intoxication. Tents are rarely uſed in their armies, when conſiſting only in cavalry. Even the officers then have frequently nothing but a ſmall carpet to ſit and lie upon; and the whole baggage of the general is perhaps carried on a ſingle camel. The officers are well mounted, and have always ſpare horſes with them in the field.

Whenever the Mahrattas determine to invade a country, it is the particular endeavour of the general to inform himſelf accurately of its ſituation, and, by their frequent incurſions, there are but few

---

* See page 112.

countries

countries in Hindoſtan, that are not perfectly known to them. Detached parties precede the main army, and ſcour the country on each ſide: intelligent officers are employed upon this ſervice, and the proviſions they may meet with are collected upon the ſpot where the army is to halt. As the Mahrattas abſtain from all intoxicating liquors and animal food of every ſort, little elſe is neceſſary for the ſupport of their troops, but rice for the men, and gram for their horſes: ſhould they fail in procuring theſe articles, they have recourſe to the proviſions they bring along with them, which are again recruited as ſoon as they may find an opportunity of doing ſo. As hay is ſcarcely ever made in the ſouthern parts of Hindoſtan, the horſes are accuſtomed to eat graſs dug up by the roots, which afford a conſiderable degree of nouriſhment, and correct the purgative quality of the blade.

The

The rider, having firſt provided for his horſe, goes to his own temperate meal; which having finiſhed, he lies down perfectly contented by the ſide of his horſe; and, when called by the ſound of the *nagar*, or great drum, is inſtantly ready to mount him.

The Mahrattas tell ſtrange ſtories of the extraordinary ſagacity of their horſes; and indeed, by their being conſtantly with their riders, who are fond of careſſing and talking to them, they acquire the intelligence and docility of more domeſtic animals. They are taught to ſtop when in full gallop, and to turn round inſtantly upon their hind feet, as upon a pivot. I have ſeen a man ride up full ſpeed to an object, and, when near enough to touch it with a ſhort javelin, turn his horſe inſtantly about, and go off with equal ſpeed in an oppoſite direction: but the frequent repetition of this exerciſe muſt in the end weaken the hams and backs of their horſes,

while

while at the ſame time it expoſes them to the danger of being lamed, and rendered unſerviceable, on the ſpot.

If the intention of the Mahrattas in invading a country, be to reſent ſome injury, to force its ſovereign to pay the chout, or to comply with any other demand, their army conſiſts of nothing but cavalry, and devaſtations are then terrible. They drive off the cattle, deſtroy the harveſt, burn the villages, and cut down every living creature the ſword can reach, and that they are either unable or unwilling to ſend to their own country. Nothing is ſpared by them except the Brahman and the ox. On the report of their approach, the frightened inhabitants fly for refuge to the hills, to the woods, and under the walls of fortified towns. The rapidity of their motions leaves but little chance of bringing them to a general action; and the miſchief done by their incurſions, has frequently induced the party attacked by them, to obtain their depar-

departure by a compliance with their demands, and thus invite them to return.

If we only view the Mahrattas as engaged in war, they muſt neceſſarily appear as the moſt cruel of barbarians: but if we enter their country as travellers, and conſider them in a ſtate of peaceful ſociety, we find them ſtrictly adhering to the principles of the religion of Brimha; in harmony among themſelves, and ready to receive and aſſiſt the ſtranger. The exceſſes they commit, therefore, cannot fairly be aſcribed to a natural ferocity of character, but perhaps may be dictated by policy, or inſpired by revenge: they may ſometimes wiſh to obtain that by the dread of their invaſions, which otherwiſe could only be effected by a tedious war; or ſometimes to retaliate on the Mahomedans the cruelties they have long exerciſed upon their countrymen *.

The

* In 1771 Hyder Ally was completely defeated by them, loſt all his baggage, his cannon, and about fifteen

MINISTRY OF CULTURE · GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
संस्कृति मंत्रालय · भारत सरकार
GSL

The country under the Paiſhwa is in general not very fertile, nor does it furniſh any very conſiderable manufacture.

His family being of the Brahman caſt, it may eaſily be imagined, that the Brahmans are not only protected in their lawful privileges, but that the rites and ceremonies of their religion are ſtrictly obſerved throughout his dominions*. At the ſame time, great

---

fifteen thouſand men; and had he not ſaved his own perſon by flight, when he ſaw that the battle was irrecoverably loſt, he would probably have been killed or taken priſoner. Hyder having cut off the ears and noſes of a few Mahratta priſoners, they, in retaliation, cut off the ears and noſes of a whole regiment of Hyder's ſeapoys, and in that condition ſent them back to him with black ſtandards.

* It may not be here amiſs to take notice of a circumſtance, which, though in itſelf it may appear trifling, yet may conſiderably tend to bias the affections of the Hindoos. The ox univerſally enjoys among the Mahrattas the fulleſt protection of religious prejudice. In their dominions, no perſon, of whatever religion, nation, or rank he may be, is permitted to kill it. But in thoſe provinces that are under the Mahomedan or Engliſh government, beef is every where

great attention has always been paid by the Paiſhwas to thoſe of the military profeſſion; which

---

where publicly ſold in the markets. This ſeems to be a wanton inſult to the feelings of an already-depreſſed people; eſpecially as meat of other kinds is almoſt every where to be found in the greateſt plenty. It would therefore be no great inconvenience or mortification to thoſe, whoſe religious tenets permit the uſe of this food, to abſtain from it, in compliance with the prejudices of the natives. But if motives of complacency have no weight, the policy of preſerving ſo neceſſary an animal, deſerves ſome conſideration; as without it, huſbandry muſt ſtand ſtill; and it is nearly as prejudicial in Hindoſtan to injure the breed of this uſeful beaſt, as it would be in England to deſtroy annually a conſiderable number of horſes.

Bernier, in ſpeaking of the motives which might have induced their early legiſlators to forbid the killing of the ox, ſays:

" Ou plûtot ils auroient imprimé ce reſpect pour la " vache, parceque c'eſt d'elle qu'ils tirent le lait et " le beurre, ce qui fait une bonne partie de leur ſub- " ſiſtance, et qu'elle eſt le fondement du labourage, et " par conſequent de la vie; d'autant plus qu'il n'en " eſt pas dans les Indes, commes dans nos quartiers, " où la terre puiſſe nourrir cette grande quantite de " betail. Si l'on en tuoit dans les Indes la moitié de " ce qu'on fait en France ou en Angleterre, le païs s'en " trouveroit bientot depourvu, et la terre ſans pouvoir

which is the natural conſequence of the continual wars they have been engaged in.

On the day appointed for the march of the army upon any expedition, the Paiſhwa ſtands at the door of his tent, and, having publicly delivered the golden ſtandard to the general, receives the compliments of all as they paſs by him, which he returns even to thoſe of the moſt inferior

---

" etre cultivée. Le chaud y eſt ſi grand huit mois de " l'annee, que tout eſt ſec, et que les boeufs et les " vaches, mourant ſouvent de faim, mangent de la " vilenie dans la campagne, comme pourroient faire " des porcs ; et c'eſt à cauſe de la diſette de betail, que " du tems de Jehan Guire les Brahmens obtinrent, " qu'il ne s'en tueroit point durant un certain nom- " bre d'années, et que ces années dernieres ils pre- " ſenterent une requete à Aurengzebe, et lui firent " offre d'une ſomme conſiderable, s'il vouloit faire " une ſemblable defenſe que Jehan Guire. Ils de- " montroient que depuis cinquante ou ſoixante ans, " pluſieurs terres demeuroient incultes, parceque les " boeufs et les vaches etoient devenus trop rares et " trop chers. Peut-etre même que ces legiſlateurs " auroient conſideré, que la chair de vache et de boeuf " dans les Indes n'a pas grand gout, ni n'eſt guere " ſaine, ſi ce n'eſt un peu dans l'hiver pendant le " froid."

rank.

rank. The command of the army in his abſence is always given to ſome chief of conſequence, whoſe expences, whilſt he is on ſervice, are defrayed by government, notwithſtanding he may poſſeſs conſiderable jaghires, or eſtates, of his own. But to prevent profuſion, an officer always accompanies the army, called the *karkun*, who keeps an exact account of all diſburſements.

The revenue, ariſing from the countries which are immediately under the Paiſhwa, and the tribute paid to him as vicegerent of the ſovereign, is computed at about ten crore of rupees, or ſomething more than ten millions ſterling; but if we deduct the charge of collecting this revenue, and the allowances made to different chiefs for the maintenance of troops kept in readineſs by them for the ſervice of the ſtate, the Paiſhwa cannot be ſuppoſed to receive above four crores, or ſomething more than four millions ſterling, neat into his

treaſury. The expences to be defrayed from this ſum, are the pay of all the troops immediately belonging to the Paiſhwa, and the court eſtabliſhment, which may amount together to about three millions *per annum*; it therefore appears, that the revenue of the ſtate exceeds the neceſſary expenditure by about one million ſterling *per annum*; and, notwithſtanding long and expenſive wars, it is ſaid, that at the death of Narrain Row, the ſtate was clear of any debt; and that a ſurplus exiſted in the treaſury of about two millions, which were diſſipated by Rogobah.

The *Deckan*, as left by Nizam al Muluck to his ſon, in 1748, was by far the moſt important ſoubadary of the Mogul empire; and the Soubadar, or viceroy, governed a country of much greater extent than the largeſt kingdom in Europe. Since then, many provinces have been conquered by, and ceded to, the Mahrattas: and the Northern Circars, belonging to the

the Engliſh; the Carnatic, poſſeſſed by the Nabob of Arcot; moſt of the territories of Tippoo Saib; and many other provinces of leſs note, though formerly ſubordinate to the viceroy of the Deckan, no longer acknowledge his authority.

The countries that remain to Nizam Ally Khan, the preſent Soubadar, are, however, ſtill ſo conſiderable, that they might entitle him to fill a place of importance among the powers of Hindoſtan, were they not ſo ill governed, and his finances in ſo wretched a condition, as to have deprived him of the weight and energy which he might otherwiſe poſſeſs.

The poſſeſſions of Tippoo Saib, ſon and ſucceſſor of Hyder Ally, are bounded on the north by the territories of the Paiſhwa; on the ſouth by Travancore, a country belonging to an independent Hindoo prince; on the weſt by the ſea; and on the eaſt by a high and broad ridge of mountains which ſeparate them from thoſe of the Na-

bob of Arcot. The country to the eaſt of theſe mountains, is called the Carnatic *Payen Ghat*; and that to the weſt, belonging to Tippoo Saib, Carnatic *Bhalla Ghat*. Theſe two form the country that was formerly called in general *the Carnatic*, though it is now underſtood as meaning only the former. The names of Bhalla Ghat, and Payen Ghat, are expreſſive of the natural ſituations of thoſe countries; the level of the Bhalla Ghat being conſiderably above that of the Payen Ghat, and by that means the air in the former is much cooler than in the latter.

The ridge of mountains which ſeparate theſe two countries begins almoſt directly at Cape Comorin, the extremity of the peninſula. As the Hindoos have an ancient tradition that the *ſeven pagodas* * ſtood formerly at a conſiderable diſtance from the ſea; they have it likewiſe handed

* See p. 95.

down

down to them from a ſtill more remote period, that theſe mountains once formed the margin of the ocean. This tradition receives conſiderable probability from the various kinds of ſea ſhells that are found in different parts of the hills of the Carnatic Payen Ghat. Petrified trees are frequently to be met with on the tops of mountains, that are not even covered with earth ſufficient to produce any kind of vegetation: and in ſome of the hills there are large caverns, which evidently appear to have been hollowed out by the water.

All theſe appearances prove that the globe in theſe parts muſt have undergone ſome very conſiderable changes; and that the mountains either lay once at the bottom of the ſea; or that, by ſome inundation, the earth, which covered them, has been waſhed away, and their ſurfaces interſperſed with the productions peculiar to the ocean.

The vaſt height of theſe mountains, and their great uninterrupted extent, fix not only the boundaries of the two Carnatics, but, by ſtopping the courſe of the winds, likewiſe divide their ſeaſons. When the northerly monſoon, or wind, prevails on the coaſt of Coromandel, and in the bay of Bengal, the ſoutherly winds reign on the coaſt of Malabar; and when the northerly winds blow on the latter, the ſoutherly prevail on the former coaſt.

The northerly winds are expected on the coaſt of Coromandel, and in the bay of Bengal, about the middle of October. The periodical change, which is followed by the rainy ſeaſon, is called the *great monſoon*. It is frequently accompanied by violent hurricanes, which renders it dangerous for ſhips to remain upon the coaſt at that ſeaſon; nor can the weather be conſidered as fully reſtored to its uſual ſerenity, till about the middle of December,

ber. Storms ſometimes happen even later. A part of the Engliſh ſquadron was loſt before Pondicherry on the 1ſt of January 1761; but ſuch inſtances are very rare.

In conſequence of many fatal accidents, there are now eſtabliſhed orders for all ſhips belonging to his Majeſty and the Eaſt India Company, to quit the coaſt by the 15th of October. But as ſeaſons ſometimes paſs away without harm, the commanders of ſhips belonging to individuals often remain, and not unfrequently fall victims to their indiſcretion. For if a ſtorm ſets in ſuddenly from the eaſtward, which ſometimes happens, it is impoſſible for veſſels to ſtand out to ſea; they then run the greateſt riſk of foundering at their anchors, or being daſhed to pieces in the ſurge, which, almoſt the whole extent of the coaſt, breaks at a conſiderable diſtance from the ſhore.

The ſoutherly wind ſets in about the middle of April, and the change then being

MINISTRY OF CULTURE · GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
GSL

ing milder in its effects, than that in October, it is called the *little monſoon*.

The weſterly wind from the land is felt early in May; but it extends at ſea only a few leagues from the ſhore. By blowing over an immenſe tract of country ſcorched with the burning ſun, it acquires an exceſſive degree of heat, which begins to be inconvenient about eight in the morning, and continues to increaſe till about noon, when there is generally a breeze from the ſea. But the breeze ſometimes ſets in later, and even a whole day will paſs without it. From the time the land wind ceaſes, till the breeze from the ſea begins, there is often a ſhort interval of calm. The wind from the ſea dies away towards midnight; ſometimes earlier, and, after another interval of calm, is ſucceeded by the wind from the land. Though this wind be cool during the night, or rather loſes the ſcorching quality that it poſſeſſes during the day, the natives carefully avoid

ſleeping

ſleeping expoſed to it, as it frequently occaſions violent rheumatic pains. By bringing clouds from the weſtern mountains, it in the end produces violent ſqualls of thunder and rain. From the repetition of them, notwithſtanding the proximity of the ſun, the weather grows more temperate, and the ſcorching heat of the wind ceaſes early in June. During the extremeſt heat of the wind from the land, I have ſeen the mercury in a Fahrenheit's thermometer, riſe in the ſhade to 114 degrees. I have known ſeveral inſtances of perſons dying ſuddenly during the heat; yet theſe accidents were to be aſcribed to intemperance, or to their expoſing themſelves improperly abroad; rather than to the ſole and immediate effect of the weather, which is not thought dangerous, or even unhealthy, to thoſe who live with moderation, and do not go out in the exceſſive heat of the day.

Water expoſed to the land wind in the common earthen veſſels of the country, or

in any veſſel, if covered with a wet cloth, becomes remarkably cold, and the degree of cold is augmented in proportion as the heat and ſtrength of the wind may increaſe.

It is a uſual charity with the natives who can afford it, to ſtation perſons during this ſeaſon at the different Choulteries, to give gruel made of rice to all paſſengers who may chooſe it; and they even erect temporary Choulteries, or ſheds, at ſhort diſtances from each other, that thoſe who are likely to be overcome by the heat may find places to repoſe in.

From what has been ſaid, it may be obſerved, that each monſoon, or regular trade wind, in reality laſts but about three months and a half, or four months, during which the wind blows from the ſame quarter, and with nearly the ſame degree of ſtrength; and that each is ſucceeded by two months, or two months and a half, during which the wind is variable, ſometimes ſtormy,

and

and the navigation near the coaſt dangerous.

Hyder Ally was firſt known to the Engliſh, as an officer in the Myſore army, that was led by the Hindoo regent of that country to the aſſiſtance of Chunda Saib, who pretended to the government of the Carnatic; in which he was ſupported by the French, in oppoſition to Mahomed Ally Khan, who was protected by the Engliſh. Hyder Ally, or as he was then called Hyder Naick, diſtinguiſhed himſelf on the 17th of Auguſt 1754, in an attack made on a convoy of ſtores and proviſions going to the Engliſh camp near Trichanopoly, and on that occaſion was noticed by Mr. Lawrence, who commanded the Engliſh army. After his return to Myſore, he roſe by a courſe of intrigues, and by events favourable to his views, to the command of the forces, and to the office of Duan, or firſt miniſter.

Soon

Soon after his elevation to this ſtation, he confined the Rajah, who was a youth, and by that ſingle ſtep ſeized the whole authority of the government. He however continued to conduct the public buſineſs in the name of the Rajah, nor would he inhabit the palace, which was in reality converted into a priſon for the royal family, being ſtrongly guarded, and no one ſuffered to enter it without his immediate permiſſion. He ſometimes went thither in great ſolemnity, under pretence of viſiting or receiving the orders of the Rajah; but the rumour of theſe viſits filled the Hindoos with horror, for they were generally found to portend the death of their prince, or of ſome of his kinſmen. Hyder being naturally of a ſuſpicious temper, and his ſuſpicions being increaſed by the conſciouſneſs of the criminality of his ſituation, and the danger to which he was continually expoſed, is ſaid never to have viſited the palace,

lace, unleſs to be a witneſs to the execution of his bloody orders, in regard to the unhappy victims of his diſtruſt *. In the year 1771, when the perſon from whom I learned many particulars of him was at Seringpatam, three of theſe unfortunate princes had been already ſacrificed to his caprice or his fears.

If we conſider Hyder Ally merely as a ſoldier or a ſtateſman, we muſt allow that he had many brilliant qualities neceſſary to fill both theſe characters. He has fre-

* A diſtinguiſhed officer in the ſervice of Hyder Ally, named Mahomed Ally, a man of a bold and open temper, ſaid to one of the miniſters, upon the elevation of a new Rajah, "And how long may we "ſuppoſe this Rajah will live?" As Hyder had every where ſpies, it is probable that this was reported to him: but it muſt be mentioned to his honour, and as a proof of his diſcernment, that knowing his character to be frank and honeſt, he never withdrew his confidence from him, nor even ſeemed offended, though he frequently ſpoke with great freedom in his own preſence. But his ſon Tippoo, more violent and leſs judicious than his father, put Mahomed Ally to death ſoon after his acceſſion to the government.

quently

quently been called the Cromwell of the Eaſt; but excepting that they were both uſurpers, and maintained the government againſt the inclinations of the people, I do not think that in any other view they will admit of a juſt parallel. The countries where they were born, their education, the people who oppoſed them, and with whom they had to act, were altogether different.

Hyder probably executed his plan ſoon after he conceived it. The prince was but a youth, and the office of Duan, or firſt miniſter, being united with the command of the army, the whole power of a deſpotic government was in his hand.

Cromwell, when he firſt engaged in the civil wars, certainly could not foreſee that he one day ſhould be the ruler of the Britiſh dominions. Like many other men who have riſen to extraordinary pre-eminence, he mounted from one ſtep to another, and from each ſaw further objects, which

which he was ambitious to attain; but the laſt and grand proſpect probably only opened to his view towards the end of the conteſt, or perhaps not before it was decided.

Hyder effected his uſurpation by deceit, ingratitude, and the breach of every ſacred and moral duty. Cromwell, who had never received any favours from the court, and was perhaps quite unknown to the king, openly drew his ſword to oppoſe an authority, which he, and many others, thought unconſtitutional, and injurious to the rights of the people; and however we may hate the man, and in many reſpects reprobate his conduct, yet it is not impoſſible the ſteps he firſt took may with juſtice be aſcribed to a principle of public virtue, lodged in a bold and manly breaſt. During the rebellion, he appears as an intrepid ſoldier; deceit and cunning, of which he doubtleſs had an abundant ſhare,

were employed afterwards to delude thoſe with whom he had acted, and to obtain the high ſituation at which he at laſt arrived.

Hyder governed a mild and effeminate people, who were born under abſolute authority, and accuſtomed to implicit obedience. Cromwell had to curb the impetuoſity of a bold and reſtleſs race of men, animated with the ſpirit of liberty, and accuſtomed to conteſts, many of whom added to a birth and education very ſuperior to his own, formidable talents and abilities.

Hyder, raiſed from a ſlave to a tyrant, felt merely for his own ſafety, and aſpired only at perſonal renown. Cromwell, though he had ſacrificed his own honour, felt nicely for that of his nation, and all that courage and thoſe abilities which had carried his ambition through every obſtacle and crime to its utmoſt wiſh, were afterwards

wards exerted to extend and maintain the glory and intereſts of his country.

Both the revenue and the force of Hyder Ally have been greatly exaggerated. The former amounted, I believe, to about four millions ſterling. But he gave an unremitting attention to his revenue and diſburſements, and was œconomical in his perſonal expences. He paid his troops with more regularity, and eſtabliſhed a greater degree of diſcipline amongſt them than any other of the native powers. But the combined forces of the Nizam and Hyder having been entirely defeated by the Engliſh at Trinomaly, in the year 1767; he ſoon inferred from the event of that battle, that the progreſs his troops had made in diſcipline, was but ſmall, compared with the ſuperiority enjoyed by a regular European army; and that as his infantry was ſtill far from being in a ſtate to be relied on, when oppoſed to that, it

might therefore be the means of his defeat, by expoſing him to fight againſt his will. Theſe conſiderations led him to encreaſe his cavalry; he diminiſhed his baggage; he procured, though at great expence, the beſt cattle to carry it, and to draw his artillery. Thus provided, in two ſucceſſive wars he entered the Carnatic Payen Ghat, and carried his devaſtations almoſt to the gates of Madras. The Engliſh, deſtitute of horſe, and with draught and carriage cattle much inferior to Hyder's, reaped but little advantage from their victories: after having with difficulty brought him to action, they did little more than take poſſeſſion of the ground quitted by the enemy; his army could outmarch them in the proportion of more than four miles to three; his ſcouring parties continually haraſſed them, cut off their ſupplies of ſtores and proviſions, and laid waſte the country; but had they been poſ-

ſeſſed

ſeſſed of a good body of cavalry, the war, if well conducted, would probably have been ended in a campaign.

Hyder Ally ſeems to have deſpiſed that ſtate and ceremony, which are in general cheriſhed by princes, as eſſential to their power, and requiſite to maintain reſpect. But as he was not afraid of falling in the opinion of the public by being approached, he granted an eaſy acceſs to his perſon to all who wiſhed to ſpeak to him on public affairs. The day from an early hour was devoted to buſineſs; the evening to amuſement. His miniſters, and thoſe who attended to pay their court, went away at a fixed time; only ſuch remained as were invited, and thoſe generally, who were admitted to his convivial hours, were perſons of but little weight or importance, either in the army or the ſtate. Though perhaps not wantonly cruel, he was accuſed of being void of humanity, deſtitute of gratitude and generoſity, and licentious

in

in his pleaſures, to the effects of which he ultimately fell a ſacrifice.

The enmity which ſubſiſted between Hyder and the Mahrattas, ſeems tranſmitted to his ſon; and ſhould ever the different Mahratta chiefs unite againſt him, from what we have ſeen effected by the Paiſhwa alone, it may reaſonably be expected, that he could not long reſiſt them.

The Engliſh, and the princes who are dependent upon them, certainly compoſe the moſt formidable power in Hindoſtan. But as they have employed the pen of ſo many authors, and have been the objects of ſo much public inveſtigation, it would be unneceſſary, perhaps preſumptuous, to attempt to add any thing to the information that is already in the poſſeſſion of the public.

THE END.

MINISTRY OF CULTURE · GOVERNMENT OF INDIA · सत्यमेव जयते · भारत सरकार

GSL 423

ERRATA.

Page 89. line 2 *from bottom, for* flouriſh, *read* flouriſhed.
125.—— 14. *for* Japaſivee, *read* Tapaſivee.
134.—— 7 *from bottom, for* multitude of, *read* multitude, or.
181.—— 4. *dele* made at the temples.
190.—— 4. *for* Brahmans, *read* Brachmanes.
194.—— 4. *for* Kanſcrit, *read* Hanſcrit.
253.—— 9. *for* Letchiney, *read* Letchimy.
255.—— 12. *for* tunes, *read* ſongs.
282.—— 6. *for* nice both, *read* nice in waſhing, both.
293.—— 13. *for* two or three, *read* two and three.
302.—— 5 *of note, for* Parians, *read* Pariars.
309.—— 1. *for* that of attending, *read* by attending.
335.—— 17 *of note, for* two or three, *read* two and three.
354.—— 3 *from bottom, for* their left flank, *read* the left flank of the Mahrattas.
355. *laſt line of note, for* Balaſee, *read* Balajee.
361.—— 4. *for* forget, *read* forgot.
362.—— 12. *for* Sakky, *read* Sakhy.
371.—— 11 & 15. *for* Mohſieu, *read* Mohſien.
398.—— 8. *for* and devaſtations, *read* and their devaſtations.

MINISTRY OF CULTURE · GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
संस्कृति मंत्रालय · भारत सरकार

GSL

SKETCHES

OF THE

MYTHOLOGY

AND

CUSTOMS

OF THE

HINDOOS.

by Geo Forster

LONDON:
PRINTED IN THE YEAR
MDCC LXXXV.

MINISTRY OF CULTURE · GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
संस्कृति मंत्रालय · भारत सरकार

GSL

SKETCHES

OF THE

MYTHOLOGY

AND

CUSTOMS

OF THE

HINDOOS,

MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

TO THE HONORABLE THE

COURT OF DIRECTORS

OF THE

EAST-INDIA COMPANY,

BY THEIR DUTIFUL SERVANT,

GEORGE FORSTER.

London,
July, 1785.

MINISTRY OF CULTURE · GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
GSL

THE following curſory diſſertation, which has been extracted from private letters, the Author is induced to lay before the Public, from a deſire of throwing ſome light on a ſubject, hitherto, but partially known in Europe; and alſo, with the view of prompting others, whoſe bent of diſpoſition and conveniency of ſituation may lead them into ſuch reſearches, to enlarge on ſo curious a matter.

To hold out an aſylum to the memory of an antient, and a once great people, who before the fall

of

MINISTRY OF CULTURE · GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
GSL

of their empire were amply enlightened by ſcience, and who were governed by a ſyſtem of laws and policy, which had the moſt ſalutary effects in rendering them virtuous and happy, will yield a ſufficient compenſation to the man of philanthropy, for every difficulty that he may encounter in the purſuit of a ſtudy which will be found, it is to be feared, entangled in ſome diſcouraging perplexities.

MINISTRY OF CULTURE · GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
GSL 43

Extract of a Letter, dated at Banaris in September, 1782.

THE city of Banaris, in point of its wealth, coſtly buildings, and the number of its inhabitants, is claſſed in the firſt rank of thoſe now remaining in Hinduſtan, in the poſſeſſion of the Hindoos.

To deſcribe, with any degree of preciſion, the various temples dedicated in this place to the almoſt in-

 numerable

numerable deities, and to explain the origin of their foundation, with the neceſſary arrangement, would require a knowledge, infinitely ſuperior to mine, in the myſterious rites of the Hindoo mythology.

They are, at this day, enveloped in ſuch impenetrable obſcurity, that even thoſe Pundits who are the moſt ſkilfully verſed in the Sumſcrit,* are not able to throw on them lights ſufficiently clear for the rendering them comprehenſible to the generality of the people.

But as ſome relation, though imperfect, of a city ſo famous in Hinduſtan, and now ſo well known in

* The language in which all their ſacred legends are preſerved.

Europe

Europe for having been one of the grand ſources of the religious worſhip of the Hindoos, and being the chief repoſitory of what ſcience yet exiſts among them, may not be unacceptable to you, together with ſome curſory inveſtigations of the mythology of Brimha, the taſk ſhall be attempted with every attention to the ſubject, and with the ſtricteſt adherence to truth.

If errors ſhould ariſe on the treating on a matter hitherto ſlightly diſcuſſed, and from its complication exceedingly abſtruſe, I have to intreat your liberal indulgence; and that though miſtaken in my concluſions, you will give me ſome commendation were it only for the endeavour of adminiſtering to a rational pleaſure.

MINISTRY OF CULTURE · GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
GSL

At the diſtance of eight miles from the city of Banaris, as it is approached on the river from the eaſtward, the eye is attracted by the view of two lofty minarets, which were erected by the order of Aurungzebe, on the foundation of an ancient Hindoo temple, dedicated to the Mhah Deve, or the God Eiſhwer.

The raiſing, on ſuch ſacred ruins, this towering Mahometan pile, which from its elevated height ſeems to look down with triumph and exaltation on the fallen ſtate of a city ſo profoundly revered by the Hindoos, would appear to have been prompted to the mind of Aurungzebe by a bigotted and intemperate deſire of inſulting their religion.

If ſuch was his wiſh, it hath been moſt completely fulfilled.

For the Hindoos conſider this monument as a diſgraceful record of a foreign yoke, and as proclaiming to every ſtranger, that their favorite city has been debaſed, and the worſhip of their gods defiled.

From the top of the minarets there is ſeen an entire and a very beautiful proſpect of Banaris, which occupies a ſpace of about two miles and a half along the northern bank of the Ganges, and a mile inland from the river.

Many of the houſes are remarkably high, ſome of them having ſix and ſeven ſtories, and built of a ſtone reſembling that ſort found in the quar-

ries

ries of Portland, and which abounds in this part of the country.

The ſtreets, wherein theſe lofty buildings are ſituated, are ſo narrow as not to admit of two carriages a-breaſt.

The conſequence of this large city being conſtructed on ſo confined a plan, is, that the air, from being deprived of a free circulation, becomes putrid and obnoxious, and in particular ſeaſons cauſes fevers of a malignant ſpecies, and ſevere bilious obſtructions.

In addition to this pernicious effect, proceeding from a corrupted atmoſphere, there is at moſt times an intolerable ſtench, which ariſes from the many tanks diſperſed in the different

ferent quarters of the town, whoſe waters and borders are appropriated to the common uſe of the inhabitants.

The filth alſo, which is indiſcriminately thrown into the ſtreets, and there left expoſed, (for the Hindoos poſſeſs but a ſmall portion of a general cleanlineſs) add to the compound of ill ſmells which ſo much offend the noſtrils of every one entering this city.

The irregular and very confined mode which has been invariably adhered to in the conſtruction of Banaris, has, in a great meaſure, deſtroyed the pleaſing effects which ſymmetry and arrangement would otherwiſe have beſtowed on a city, entitled from its numerous and expenſive habitations,

to

MINISTRY OF CULTURE · GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
GSL

to demand a preference to any capital which I have ſeen in India.

In the reſearches which I have been enabled to make into the principles of the Hindoo religion, I have received great aid from a converſant knowledge of the Mhahrattah language, and an acquaintance, though trivial, with the Sumſcrit.

The uſe of this laſt tongue is now chiefly confined to a particular ſect of Bramins, who officiate in the character of prieſts, and it hath ever been adopted as the channel of conveying to the Hindoos, the eſſentials of their religion, with all the various forms of their worſhip.

The Sumſcrit is a ſonorous language, its periods flow with great boldneſs,

MINISTRY OF CULTURE · GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
GSL

boldneſs, and terminate in a cadence peculiarly muſical, and it abounds in a pith and conciſeneſs far ſuperior to any other, with which I am in any wiſe acquainted.

An extract of a ſloke or ſtanza, which has been quoted by Mr. Halhed, is a ſtriking teſtimony of the nervous compoſition, and the laconic turn of the Sumſcrit.

As it is a ſtanza of only four lines, I will inſert it, and alſo attempt the tranſlation.

Pētāche rĕnĕwān ſhĕtrōō
Father — in debt — enemy
Mātāh ſhĕtrōō rĕſhĕlēnēē
Mother — enemy — extravagant or immoral
Bhārĭāh rūpĕwūttēē ſhĕtrōō
Wife — beautiful — enemy
Pōōtrĕ ſhĕtrōō n'pūndĭtāh
Son — enemy — unlearned

The mother who hath loſt her fame,
The ſire profuſe, and foe to ſhame,
Are to their race a peſt.
A bride's ſoft joys oft' thorns implant,
And he, who roams in folly's haunt,
Deſtroys his father's reſt.

The Hindoos believe in one God, without beginning and without end; on whom they beſtow, deſcriptive of his power, a variety of epithets.

But the moſt common appellation, and which conveys the ſublimeſt ſenſe of his greatneſs, is, Sree Mun Narrain, the univerſal Protector.

The Hindoos, in their firſt and grand ſupplication to the Deity, addreſs him as endowed with the three attri-

attributes, of omnipotence, omnipreſence and omniſcience; which, in the Sumſcrit, are expreſſed by the terms, neer anjin, neer akar, and neer goon.

Though this explanation may not, in literary ſtrictneſs, compriſe in it the preciſe meaning of the Engliſh text, it doth ſo virtually, and in the ampleſt ſenſe.

A circumſtance which forcibly ſtruck my attention, was the Hindoo belief of a Trinity.

The perſons are, Sree Mun Narrain, the Mhah Letchimy (a beautiful woman), and a Serpent, which are emblematical of ſtrength, love and wiſdom.

Theſe perſons, by the Hindoos, are ſuppoſed to be wholly indiviſible.

The one is three, and the three are one.

In the beginning they ſay, that the Deity created three men, to whom he gave the names of Brimha, Vyſtnou, and Shevah.*

To the firſt, was committed the power of creating mankind, to the ſecond of cheriſhing them, and to the third that of reſtraining and correcting them.

Brimha, at one breath, formed the human kind out of the four elements; amongſt which he infuſed, as I underſtood the intrepretation, a vacuum.

* Often called Eiſhwer, or the Mhah Deve.

Before

Before the creation of man, Sree Mun Narrain framed the world out of a chaos; it was covered with the waters, ſurrounded by an utter darkneſs, and inhabited by a demon, the ſuppoſed author of evil, whom the Godhead drove into an abyſs under the earth.

The Hindoos, as Mr. Halhed, in his Tranſlation of the Code of Hindoo Laws, has fully and clearly ſet forth, are arranged in four grand caſts or tribes*; that of the Bramin, the Chittery, the Bhyſe and the Sooder.

* There is, in India, an aboriginal race of people who are not claſſed in any of the ſects, and are employed in the meaneſt and moſt menial offices. They are not permitted to enter any temple of the Hindoos, and in their diet they have no reſtriction. On ſome parts of the coaſt of Choromandel they are called Pariahs, and, in Bengal, Hurrees.

Each

Each of theſe caſts are ſub-divided into numerous ſects, the particular uſages of which are preſerved with great care and attentive diſtinctions.

There is an immenſe number of ſectaries of the ſame tribe, who do not admit of the intercourſe of marriage with each other, or of eating at the ſame board.

From the beſt information which I have been enabled to procure, it would ſeem that the genuine Chittery, or Rajah race, has for a great length of time been extinct, and in its place a ſpurious tribe has been introduced.

The Hindoos, compoſing theſe caſts and claſſes, are ultimately branched out in two diviſions; the one denominated

minated the Vyſtnou Bukht, and the other the Shevah Bukht.

The followers of the firſt are diſtinguiſhed by marking the forehead with a longitudinal, and thoſe of the ſecond with a parallel line.

In the temple of Vyſtnou, he is worſhipped under the repreſentation of a human figure, having a circle of heads and four hands, emblems of an all-ſeeing, and an all-provident Being.

The repreſentation of a fabulous bird, on which he is ſuppoſed to ride, and denotive of the velocity of his motion, is frequently placed in front of his image.

Shevah or Eiſhwer, or as he is uſually called by the Hindoos, the

Mhah

Mhah Deve, or great God, is repreſented by a compound figure, deſcribing the male and female parts of generation, and deſigned as ſymbols of procreation and fecundity.

Theſe faculties or qualities being held amongſt the Hindoos as the choiceſt bleſſings, and the deprivation of them deemed a ſevere reproach and misfortune.

Facing this deſignation of the Mhah Deve, is generally ſeen, in a ſuppliant poſture, the image of a cow, which is ſaid to have derived its peculiarly ſacred qualities from having been choſen by this god as his favorite conveyance.

The more enlightened Pundits tell you, that this animal hath been preſerved from ſlaughter from its great utility

utility to man; it being his ableſt aſſiſtant in the labors of the field, and the chief ſupport in his immediate maintenance.

Not to ſay that it argues a ſound policy to ſtamp this creature with ſo ſacred a mark; for were its fleſh eaten, as Hinduſtan is productive of but few horſes, the various branches of agriculture would ſuffer an eſſential injury.

Another figure repreſents Shevah with four hands (holding in them different emblems of his power) and five heads; four of which are directed to the cardinal points, and the fifth is placed with the face upwards, in the act of contemplating the grand Deity.

After the ſervice which Brimhah has performed on earth, it would reaſonably be concluded, that his praiſe for the obligations which mankind have received at his hands, in ſome degree, would be conformable to his works.

But the Hindoos have not dedicated one temple to his honor, nor have they ſet apart or ſanctified one day in remembrance of his deeds.

It would redound but little to my credit, were I to inſert in this place, the reaſon alledged in their religious tracts, for this ſeeming neglect of Brimhah.

It is a tale framed to amuſe the credulous Hindoo, and procure a meal to an artful prieſt.

This

This oſtenſible want of attention to the memory of Brimhah, may on a more abſtracted ground be attributed to the opinion, that the powers of procreation having been once ſet in action, and operating by a law, general and undeviating, whoſe immediate benefits exiſt, and are evidently diſplayed in its effects, there was no neceſſity of commemorating the firſt individual cauſe.

The Hindoos believe implicitly in predeſtination, and in the tranſmigration of the ſoul.

The firſt, as it frequently cramps the genius and obſtructs its progreſſion, yet has a tendency in conſoling them in every misfortune, and adminiſtering to them a comfort in all the untoward events of life.

They ſay it is the hand of God, which for ſome inſcrutinable purpoſe directs and impels the actions of his creature.

The doctrine of the metempſychoſis reſtrains them from the uſe of animal food* ; an aliment not neceſſary, and often attended with pernicious conſequences in a hot climate.

This belief has alſo a ſtrong tendency to infuſe into their minds an abhorrence of all ſanguinary acts, and to inculcate the virtues of humanity and a general affection.

* This tenet is not at this day ſtrictly adhered to, for the Hindoos of the ſecond and fourth caſt occaſionally uſe fleſh meats, and the Bramins of Bengal invariably eat fiſh.

The

The Hindoos compute their grand evolutions of time by Joques, of which they have four, correſponding in their nature with the golden, ſilver, brazen, and iron ages of the antients.

The preſent, they ſay, is the Khullee, or the fourth Joque; and that at the expiration of every age, the Supreme Being has deſtroyed this globe of earth, which has been re-created at the commencement of the one ſucceeding, and that a continued ſucceſſion of Joques will revolve *ad infinitum*.

The records of this ancient and extraordinary people, unfortunately for the learned of the preſent day, teem ſo profuſely with fable, and abound throughout in ſuch extravagant relations

tions

tions of the actions of their demi-gods, greatly ſimilar in their feats to the Bacchus, Hercules, and Theſeus of the Greeks, that no rational or ſatisfactory concluſion can be drawn for any adjuſtment of chronology.

A Pundit will introduce into his legend a laack* of years with as much facility, and perhaps conviction to himſelf, as a modern commentator would reduce to his ſtandard half a century.

The principles of the Hindoo religion, with its moſt eſſential tenets, were compoſed, it is aſſerted, by Brimhah, and comprized in four books, entitled the Baids or Vaids, a word

* An hundred thouſand.

ſignifying

ſignifying myſtery in the Sumſcrit language.

In that part of the peninſula of India bordering on the Choromandel ſide, theſe ſacred writings are named the Vaidums.

The Telingahs and the Malabars commonly change the letter B into a V, and invariably terminate all Sumſcrit words with an M.

The Shaſtre, meaning ſcience, is a moſt voluminous commentary on the Baids; and has been written by various Pundits, for the purpoſe of illuſtrating their mythology. From the Shaſtre proceed thoſe prepoſterous and irreconcileably ſuperſtitious ceremonies which have been dragged by their doctors

doctors into the Hindoo ſyſtem of worſhip ; all of them tending to ſhackle the vulgar mind, and produce in it a ſlaviſh reverence for the tribe of Bramins.

The privilege of reading the Baids and expounding its texts is only allowed to them, and prohibited under ſevere penalties from the inſpection of the other caſts.

By the ſole inveſtment of this ſingular authority, the prieſt is left at liberty to explain the original doctrine as may be the moſt conducive in conſolidating the power and promoting the intereſts of his order.

In the tranſmigration of the ſoul into different bodies, conſiſts the various

ous gradations of reward and punishment amongst the Hindoos.

Conformably to their good or evil actions they are transposed into the bodies of such creatures, whether of the human or brute species, as by their conduct, whilst in the occupation of their former tenements, they may have merited.

They do not admit of the infliction of eternal punishment, and shudder at the idea of a belief so disconsonant to the opinion which they have formed of the Supreme Being.

Evil dispositions, they say, are chastised by a confinement in the bodies of those animals whose natures they most resemble, and are constrained to occupy them until their vices are either

eradicated, or ſo purged as that they ſhall be judged worthy of poſſeſſing ſuperior forms.

The good actions of man, the Hindoo law-giver has written, will be rewarded by their being made to perſonify ſuch beings as enjoy the utmoſt human happineſs.

As that which the magiſtrate experiences on the juſt and merciful execution of the truſt which has been committed to him; or, that high ſenſe of pleaſure which the man of humanity partakes of, when he has alleviated the diſtreſſes of the unfortunate, or otherwiſe promoted the welfare of mankind.

The man who is acceptable in the ſight of his God, the Hindoo ſays, will

will copiouſly imbibe all thoſe heart-felt ſatisfactions, which are produced from the well performance of the different duties of life.

After having occupied a ſeries of bodies to the approbation of the Deity and his ſoul, from a purſuit of virtue, ſhall be purified from the taints of evil, the Hindoo is then admitted to participation of the radiant and never ceaſing glory of his firſt cauſe.

The ſoul's receiving this act of bliſs, is deſcribed, by comparing it to a ray of light, attracted by the grand powers of the ſun, to which it ſhoots with an immenſe velocity, and is there abſorbed in the blaze of ſplendor.

Yum Durm Rajah officiates in the ſame capacity amongſt the Hindoos,

as Minos did in the infernal regions of the antients.

At the tribunal of Yum Durm, all departed ſouls are ſuppoſed to appear, and their actions are proclaimed aloud by this judge, who paſſes an immediate ſentence.

Should the diſpoſition of a man have been ſo flagitiouſly wicked and depraved, as to be judged unworthy even of an introduction into the body of the vileſt animal, ſuch corporeal torments are impoſed on him as may be thought adequate to the tranſgreſſion, and the ſoul is afterwards placed in ſome ſuitable ſtation on earth.

According to the religious traditions of the Hindoos, Sree Mun Narrain, ſince the creation of the world, has at nine

nine different periods aſſumed incarnated forms for the purpoſe of eradicating ſome particular evil, or otherwiſe chaſtiſing the ſins of mankind.

The Hindoos worſhip a ſecondary ſpecies of deity, which they wildly reckon at the number of the thirty-three krore*, and who in their different functions are deſigned to repreſent the multiplied infinitude of power of the Supreme Deity.

From the croud of images which the Bramin has placed in the temples of the Hindoos, they have been branded with the appellation of idolaters, or adorers of many gods.

Let this mode of offering up ſupplications

* A krore is a hundred laacks.

plications or thankſgivings to the Supreme Being be diſpaſſionately examined, and it may be ſeen, that a perſonification of the attributes of the Deity, is not unfitly adapted to the general comprehenſion.

For thoſe, and they compoſe a great portion of the people, who, from a want of the requiſite education, are not endowed with the ability of reading the praiſe of God, can with facility conceive an idea of his greatneſs, by contemplating a figure, ſculptured with many heads and with many hands, adorned with every ſymbol of human power, and beheld by all claſſes of men with the utmoſt reverence and awe.

Were the origin of emblematical figures deduced with a poſitive degree

of

of certainty, there would remain little doubt of diſcovering, that they far preceded the uſe of letters.

The Spaniſh records mention, that the intelligence of the firſt arrival of the Europeans on the coaſt of Mexico, was deſcribed to Motezuma by figures painted on cotton cloth.

In a rude ſociety, it was evidently a more eaſy operation to convey an idea thro' the medium of a ſimple figure cut in wood or moulded in clay, than to invent an alphabet, and out of it compoſe an aſſemblage of words neceſſary for the formation of a language.

The immenſe group of Hindoo gods enjoy immortality, which they are gifted with from drinking a beverage, called

called Amrut, and which ſeems to bear ſome analogy to the nectar of Homer's deities.

In their mythology, there is an elegant deſcription of nine goddeſſes, reſembling in a great degree the muſes of the antients, in the nature of their provinces.

There is alſo, moſt pictureſquely delineated, the God of Love, who has a variety of epithets, all ſignificant of the unbounded ſway, which he poſſeſſes over the hearts of men.

His common names are Kaum and Mudden, and he is repreſented as a pleaſing youth, armed with a bow and five arrows, denoting the five ſenſes, each of which weapon is baited with different qualities of the poiſon, which

is

is infuſed by the communication of the paſſion of love.

A curious picture was found at Tanjore, when the fort was captured, of Kaum riding on an elephant, whoſe form was compoſed of the figures of ſeven young women, which were entwined together in ſo ingenious and whimſical a manner, that they exhibited an exact ſhape of that bulky animal.

In the Biſs Eiſhwer Pagoda at Banaris, there is a deſign well executed in ſtone of the God of the Sun, ſitting in a chariot and driving a horſe with twelve heads, alluſive of the twelve ſigns of the Zodiac.

If the peruſal of this rough and abbreviated ſketch, ſhould lead on any

gentleman eſtabliſhed in this part of the country, and poſſeſſing an inclination to this caſt of inveſtigation, to proſecute a farther and a more minute inquiry into the principles of the Hindoo religion, I ſhall deem the trivial labour undergone in this reſearch, as moſt amply compenſated.

Without putting etymological proofs to the torture, or moulding to the ſhape of his ſyſtem the generally unſatisfactory and deceitful aids of chronology, the careful obſerver might be enabled to trace ſome points of the religious worſhip of the Hindoo into Egypt.

There he would diſcover the ſacred Bull, or the Cow of Shevah, placed high in the holy legends of the Coptis; he would ſee the Snake, one of the

the myſterious aſſociates of Sree Mun Narrain, devoutly revered by that nation, as an hieroglyphical emblem of wiſdom and longevity.

It would alſo appear, that the Onion ſo frequently mentioned by hiſtorians and travellers, as held in profound veneration amongſt the Egyptians, is no leſs marked with reverence in Hinduſtan; where, though the uſe of a vegetable diet, is ſo ſtrongly inculcated, and with a few deviations, commonly adopted, the Onion is forbidden to ſome of the ſects of prieſts; and, in the upper part of India, when an oath, on which a matter of conſequence depends, is adminiſtered, the Bramin frequently introduces the Onion to render the ceremony more awful.

On comparing the religious tenets, and the forms of worſhip of the Hindoos, with thoſe of the ancients, there appears in the functions of ſome of the deities, a ſtrong uniformity of likeneſs, which is not unreaſonably placed in the ſame point of view, and were it poſſible to procure a deſcription of the occupations and the various powers of the Hindoo ſubaltern gods, it might be found that the celeſtial group of the weſtern pantheon, had been ſelected from the divine aſſembly of Brimhah.

The Egyptians and the Greeks in their commerce with India, thro' the channel of the Red Sea, have left, I am induced to believe, many tokens behind them of their connection with the Hindoos.

In

In the collection of a gentleman at Banaris, there are ſeveral valuable antiques, which he purchaſed of the merchants of that city; one of which, repreſenting a Grecian matron, is cut in a ſtyle bearing every mark of a maſterly hand.

There is another, on which Cleopatra is exhibited in the act of being bitten by the aſp.

The ſame gentleman had in his poſſeſſion a Meduſa's head, on an emerald, found alſo at Banaris, which he ſent to England, and it has there been acknowledged to be genuinely Greek.

There was procured at Guzerat, ſome years ago, a very high finiſhed cameo, whereon, Hercules ſlaying the Nemean Lion, was executed in a moſt beautiful and ſtriking manner.

Theſe

Theſe circumſtances are adverted to with ſome ſhew of evincing, that during the intercourſe which exiſted between the natives of Egypt and of India, the former might have introduced into their country, with the rare and luxurious products of Hinduſtan, certain tenets and ceremonies of the Hindoo mythology.

In conſidering of the tract by which theſe antiques were brought into India, I muſt not omit mentioning, that they might have found their way into that country in the cabinets of ſome of the Muſſulman conquerors; who, in the more early period of their empire, were as warm and as enthuſiaſtic admirers of Greek productions and literature as ever the Romans were; and it is a fact, in need of no illuſtration,

illuſtration, that the revival of letters and the arts, after Rome had been ſwallowed up in Gothic ruin, received the moſt potent aid from the Arabian Kaliph, Haroun ul Rachid.

I am ſincerely to lament that my knowledge in aſtronomy is ſo very confined, that I am almoſt wholly incapacitated from deſcribing the attainment which the Bramins had arrived at in that ſcience, long, previouſly to the æra in which it flouriſhed in the weſtern world.

The Zodiac, with its twelve ſigns, is well known to them; and they have beſtowed on the ſeven days, commencing the week with Sunday, the names of the planets.

The

The ſolar year of the Hindoos conſiſts of twelve months, making three hundred and ſixty days, and once in three years they annex an additional month, for the incluſion of thoſe days which are wanting to compleat the exact ſpace of time required by the earth in making its triennial revolution round the ſun.

The days of the month are calculated from the period of the full moon, and the number of them is divided into two equal parts.

To the portion of days comprized in the increaſing half of the moon, they give the name of Sood, or filling; and the other, they term Bole, or the Wain.

The

The Jogue is divided into luſtra of twelve years, each of which is diſtinguiſhed by its peculiar denomination.

The obſervatory at Banaris is an undeniable proof of the knowledge which the Hindoos have acquired in the motions of the celeſtial bodies.

Could acceſs be gotten to ſuch records of the Hindoos, as are unaccompanied with that redundancy of fable, with which their prieſts have ſo copiouſly interwoven them, it would not be preſumptuous to ſuppoſe, that we ſhould diſcover they were, in the more early age of the world, one of the moſt enlightened and powerful nations then inhabiting the face of the earth.

Their empire, as related in many of their hiſtorical tracts, conſiſted of fifty-ſix ſeparate principalities, ultimately governed by one ruler, whoſe kingdom extended from the ſouthern borders of Tartary to the iſland of Ceylon, and from the confines of Aſſam and Arracan to the river Indus.

This immenſe territory was inhabited by a people divided into four diſtinct tribes, each exerciſing different functions and occupations, and all uniting in their various branches to promote a general good.

It abounded in fair and opulent cities, which were decorated with magnificent and lofty temples for the worſhip of the gods, and with ſumptuous manſions, gardens and fountains

for

for the pleaſure and accommodation of the people.

Uſeful and elegant artiſans, well ſkilled in their various trades, in the raiſing ſtupendous buildings, in the fabricating gold, ſilver, and the moſt delicate cotton cloths, and in the curious workmanſhip of precious ſtones and metals, all found ample encouragement in the exerciſe of their ſeveral profeſſions.

It were almoſt ſuperfluous to ſay, that if ſome glaring indulgences in favor of the ſacred tribe are excepted, Hinduſtan muſt have been governed by ſalutary and well digeſted laws.

From the tranſlation of the code by Mr. Halhed, it is ſeen, that a well choſen ſyſtem of equitable regulations

directed the Hindoos in the punishment of crimes, and for the security of property.

The traveller was enabled to journey through this extensive empire with an ease and safety unknown in other countries.

The public roads were shaded with trees; at every halting place a caravansera, with a pond or a well pertaining to it, was founded for the conveniency of the passenger, and should he in any part of the country have been pillaged, and could produce a testimony of his loss, the district in which the damage had been sustained was obliged to make restitution.

When this empire, its polished people, and the progress which art and science

ſcience have made amongſt them, are attentively conſidered and reflected on; when, at the ſame periods, a retroſpective view is thrown on the ſtates of the European world, then immerſed in, or only immerging out of ignorance and barbarity, we muſt behold Hinduſtan with a wonder and reſpect; and we may aſſert, without forfeiting a claim to truth and moderation, that, however far the weſtern nations have, in improvements and refinement, outſtripped the followers of Brimhah, yet in the more early periods of life, they, certainly did poſſeſs valuable materials of philoſophy and uſeful knowledge.

The humane mind, will, naturally, be impreſſed with a ſenſe of ſorrow and pity for a people who have fallen from

from ſo conſpicuous a height of glory and fortune, and who, perhaps, have contributed to poliſh and exalt the very men who now hold them in ſubjection.

To form a ſatisfactory judgment of the genius of the Hindoos, or to deſcribe, with a due accuracy, the degree to which they raiſed art and ſcience, it were requiſite, if the neceſſary materials could be procured, that we did endeavour to exhibit a view of the ſituation in which theſe people were placed before they were conquered by the victorious followers of Mahomed.

A partial and a very degrading relation would be made of them, were the deſcription of their laws, government and manners, taken from the appear-

ance

ance they make in the eye of the world at this day.

The empire of Hinduſtan was overthrown by a fierce race of men, who in their furious courſe of conqueſt, exerted the moſt ſtrenuous efforts, in levelling every monument of worſhip and taſte.

They maſſacred the prieſts and plundered the temples, with a ſpecies of keenneſs and ferocity, which their prophet, himſelf, might have gloried in.

A people thus cruſhed, groaning under the load of oppreſſion, and diſmayed at the ſight of ſuch cruelties, muſt ſoon have loſt the ſpirit of ſcience and the exertion of genius.

Particu-

Particularly, as their fine arts were ſo blended with the ſyſtem of religion, that the perſecution of the one muſt have ſhed the moſt baneful influence on the exiſtence of the other.

To decide on, or affix the character of the Hindoo, from the point of view in which he is now beheld, would be in ſome degree tantamount to an attempt of conveying to the mind an exact idea of antient Greece, from the materials now preſented by that wretched country.

The diſquiſition of the man of philanthropy, and who has ſhaken off the fetters of prejudice, will be far different; he will enjoy an heart-felt pleaſure in contributing his aid towards diſpelling the mortifyng cloud, which

which hath long inveloped the hiſtory of the Hindoo.

This candid inveſtigator will carry him back to that æra of grandeur which his country enjoyed in her day of proſperity, and there hold him out for the inſpection and information of mankind; the generality of whom, whether from motives of contempt or habits of indolence, have acquired but a trivial and a very incorrect knowledge of this antient people.

It will then be ſeen, that the genius of the Hindoos was ſo happily led on, and their bent of diſpoſition ſo aptly regulated and attempered by the rules eſtabliſhed for the performance of their ſeveral occupations and profeſſions, that we are forcibly induced to

entertain a moſt reſpectable opinion of the equity of their laws and the wiſdom of their government.

A preciſion, which eradicated the idea of an error, preſcribed to them their reſpective duties in the ſtate and in ſociety, and wholly precluded any one ſect from infringing on the privileges of another.

The Bramin, was inveſted with uncontrolable power in all matters of religion; he became the invariable medium, through which the three inferior claſſes addreſſed their God; he was alſo the ſole repoſitory and diſpenſer of ſcience, and to his care and ability was intruſted the education of youth.

The

The importance of theſe offices muſt have given to the Bramin great ſway in a community, where the attaining at a knowledge of the mode of worſhip from its inexpreſſible variety of ceremony, becomes a taſk of arduous labor, and where at the ſame time it is deemed an obligation indiſpenſably incumbent on the Hindoo for his future welfare, that he be well verſed in the performance of the rites of his religion.

Theſe employments were judged of ſufficient magnitude to occupy the ſtudy and attention of the Bramin, and he was ſtrictly prohibited from engaging in any temporal concern.

The authority of exerciſing every function of royalty ſeems to have devolved, without a reſerve, on the

Chittery or Rajah, and his poſſeſſions were held hereditary in the line of legitimate male primogeniture.

The younger branches of this race had commands in the army beſtowed on them, and they were commonly entruſted with the charge of the forts and the ſtrong holds of the country.

The occupation of a merchant, with the tranſaction of every ſpecies of traffic, was delivered over to the Bhyſe or Baniam, and it was declared unlawful for the other tribes to engage in any branch of commerce.

The huſbandman, the artiſan, the common ſoldier and the labourer, compoſed the ſooder, or the fourth caſt of the Hindoos, and each of theſe reſpective

reſpective profeſſions was ſtrongly guarded againſt encroachments.

Thus diſtinctly arranged and on the ſevereſt penalties, interdicted from any extraneous mixture or the admiſſion of proſelytes, the Hindoo government acquired an uniformity and a vigor, the natural reſult of its happy principles.

Were an analogy aſcertained between the mythology of the Hindoos and the Egyptians, very perceptible traces of which preſent themſelves, it may then become a matter of doubt, which people for the greateſt ſpace of time have been the moſt poliſhed and enlightened.

From the adductions which I have brought forward, for the explanation

of

of ſome of the moſt eſſential tenets of the mythology of the Hindoos, and for the general demonſtration of the antiquity of that nation, it may appear to you, that I maintain the doctrine of Egypt's having received a portion of her ſtock of ſcience and religion from India.

With a deference to popular opinion, but without the prepoſſeſſed determination of fabricating a ſyſtem and adapting to it partial arguments, cautiouſly ſelected for its ſupport, I will confeſs to you, that I am a follower of the belief.

One fact, amongſt ſome others, has afforded me a ſatisfactory proof of the high antiquity of the Hindoos, as a civilized nation, and marks the ſtrongeſt

ſtrongeſt diſapprobation of any foreign intercourſe.

They are forbidden to croſs the river Attoc, the name of which, in many dialects of their language, ſignifies prohibition, and ſhould they paſs this boundary, they are immediately held unclean, and in the ſtrict ſenſe of their religious law, forfeit their rank in the tribes they may be claſſed in.

It is not, therefore, reaſonable to ſuppoſe that any part of a people, under this reſtriction, and who ſeem to have been ſo centred in themſelves, as to poſitively reject the admiſſion of proſelytes, would have emigrated into a diſtant country, and bring from thence a ſyſtem of religious worſhip.

Let

Let me conclude this comparative review with obſerving, that—When we ſee a people who were poſſeſſed of an ample ſtock of ſcience and well digeſted rules, for the protection and improvement of ſociety, and who profeſſed a religious creed, whoſe tenets conſiſt of the utmoſt refinement and variety of ceremony, and at the ſame time, obſerve, amongſt other Aſiatic nations, and the Egyptians of former times, but partial diſtributions of this knowledge, law and religion, we are led to entertain a ſuppoſition—that the proprietors of the leſſer have been ſupplied from the ſources of the greater fund.

If the poſitions which I have ſtated, are thought to convey reaſon, they will afford greater pleaſure to the man of curious

curious ſtudy than thoſe unſubſtantial and confuſed chronological proofs, which are often framed as they may moſt commodiouſly accord with ſome favorite Hypotheſis.

Amongſt the Hindoos, marriage*, when it can be performed with any degree of conveniency, is deemed a religious duty of an indiſpenſable nature; and it is believed, that propagating ſpecies in that ſtate, entitles parents to ſingular marks of divine favor.

* This word, in the Sumſcrit language, ſignifies pleaſure. The Hindoos in common uſage have but one wife, and when this rule is deviated from, it is conſidered as an indecency. There is a ſet of mendicants, called Joquees or Byraghees, who live in a ſtate of celibacy, but it is not a numerous one.

They ſhew a diſapprobation of celibacy by many marks of opprobrium and ſcorn; and, I have frequently obſerved, that when a Hindoo has been aſked if he was a married man, he has appeared diſconcerted, and aſhamed at the fact obliging him to anſwer in the negative, and immediately attributed the cauſe of his ſituation to ſome particular misfortune.

It is to this inſtitution, which is ſo ſtrongly recommended, and from a ſtigma being affixed on the non-obedience to it, I may ſay, even enforced—that the generally great population of Hinduſtan, and its ſpeedy recovery after the calamities of war and famine, muſt be largely aſcribed.

The

The entire ſyſtem of the domeſtic ordinances and œconomy of the Hindoos, is founded on a ſtrong, yet a ſimple baſis, out of which ariſe effects the moſt happy in themſelves, and powerfully operative in uniting the leading bonds of ſociety.

From the eſtabliſhed laws and uſage of the country, the wife depends for the enjoyment of every pleaſure, as well as for the mere ordinary accommodations of life, on the immediate exiſtence of her huſband.

It becomes her invariable intereſt to preſerve his health, and her happineſs is abſolutely centred on his living to an old age.

On the demiſe of the huſband, his wife, literally, devolves into a *caput*

mortuum, ſhe cannot marry again, ſhe is deprived of all conſequence in the family, and is diveſted of every mark of ornament and diſtinction.

There are certain religious ceremonies not lawful for her to perform; and, in ſome inſtances, ſhe is held unclean; but, on all occaſions, after her huſband's death, the widow is claſſed in the houſe as a ſlave, or a menial ſervant.

Amongſt the three firſt caſts of Hindoos, where the idea of honour is more refined, and is oftentimes carried to an extreme, rather than ſuffer this gradation, by which every female attraction is extinguiſhed, and the women themſelves reduced to the loweſt degree of mortification, on the pretence

pretence of matrimonial affection, they frequently devote themſelves on the funeral pile of their huſbands.

In addition to the dread of ſo degraded a ſtate of humiliation, the widow, on the other ſide, is told by the Bramins, that in conſequence of performing this act of heroiſm, ſhe will partake of the moſt exquiſite future joys, and that her progeny will become the immediate charge of the deity.

Though the iſſue of ſuch a reſolution muſt forcibly affect the feelings of humanity, yet as it would appear to originate in a principle, tending to ſtrengthen a ſalutary domeſtic policy, it ought not to be haſtily condemned as a cuſtom wholly cruel and unjuſt.

Con-

Conformably to the ſtate of domeſtic ſubordination, in which Hindoo women are placed, it has been judged expedient to debar them from the uſe of letters.

The Hindoos invariably hold the language, that female acquired accompliſhments are not neceſſary; whether for the purpoſe of contributing to a woman's own happineſs, or for preſerving that decorum of character, and ſimplicity of manners, which alone can render her uſeful or amiable in the eſtimation of her family.

They urge, that a knowledge of literature would have an injurious tendency in drawing a woman from her houſehold cares, and would conduce to give her a diſreliſh to thoſe offices

in

in which are centered the only ſatisfaction and amuſement that ſhe can with propriety and an obſervance of rectitude, partake of; and ſuch is the force of cuſtom, that a Hindoo woman would incur a ſevere reproach were it known, that ſhe could read or write.

The dancing girls, whoſe occupations are avowedly devoted to the pleaſures of the public, are on the contrary educated in moſt branches of learning, with the utmoſt care, and are minutely inſtructed in the knowledge of every attraction and blandiſhment which can operate in communicating the moſt refined pleaſures.

You

You will be pleaſed to obſerve, that theſe women are not obliged to ſhelter themſelves in private haunts, or are they, on account of their profeſſional conduct, marked with any opprobious ſtigma.

They compoſe a particular claſs of the ſociety they may have been originally attached to, and enjoy the declared protection and ſanction of government, for which they are aſſeſſed according to their ſeveral capacities.

No religious ceremonies or feſtival of any kind is thought to be performed with the order requiſite, unleſs accompanied with dancing girls, and it is uſual for them on a fixed day in the week to attend at the court of the prince or governor of the diſtrict,

either

either to make their obeiſance, or exhibit ſome entertainment.

And as a compenſation for ſuch ſervices, they are endowed with certain grants of government lands.

An Hindoo family, is implicitly governed by the male ſenior in it, to whom there is ſhewn every token of reverence and reſpect.

A ſon will not ſit in the preſence of his father without an expreſs deſire, and in his deportment and converſation obſerves to him the moſt affectionate behaviour.

In the courſe of my reſidence in India, and acquaintance with the Hindoos, I have known but few inſtances of female incontinence amongſt their

married women, and not one of direct undutifulneſs to parents.

I cannot avoid obſerving, alſo, in this place, that I never heard of a Hindoo free-thinker, and that their moſt illuſtrious characters, and men of the world, ſuch as Scindia, Nanah Purnawees* &c. believe the tenets of their doctrine with as much ſincerity, and practiſe the moſt minute ceremony with as much ſcrupulous attention as the ſimpleſt peaſant in their country.

* Eminent Mhahrattah chiefs.

Extract

Extract of a Letter written at Kachmire, April, 1783.

THE religion which prevails in theſe parts*, is that of Brimhah, and as I have already in a ſmall ſketch endeavoured to throw ſome light on that ancient and curious ſyſtem of worſhip, I will now paſs it over, with an offer of preſenting thoſe remarks to you ſhould you ever be diſpoſed to read them.

There does not exiſt a greater difference in the manners of the inhabitants of theſe mountains, and the people of your quarter, than generally does between high and low landers of the ſame nation.

* The mountains at the head of the Punjab.

I took notice of two uſages, which ſeem peculiar to theſe mountaineers, that of not ſhaving the beard, and embracing; this ceremony is performed by inclining the head over the left ſhoulder of the party embraced, and is never uſed more than one time at a meeting.

The cuſtom of permitting the beard to grow, proceeds, perhaps, from a certain ferocity and roughneſs immediately incident to their ſituation, and predominant in the diſpoſition of all mountaineers; which, prompts them in different modes to ſhew their diſdain and contempt of the ſofter and more luxurious manners of their low country neighbours.

The

The embracing over the left ſhoulders only, take its riſe, I would conjecture, from the deſire of having the right hand at liberty in caſe of danger.

The women have bright olive complexions, are pretty, and moſt delicately ſhaped.

There is a pleaſing freedom in their manners, which without having any tendency to immodeſty, or ſeeming to ariſe from habits of licentiouſneſs, ſtrikes you, as the ſimple reſult of that unlimited confidence which the Hindoo huſbands in general repoſe in their wives.

I have known the women to ſtop in the way, though a pot of water has been on their heads, and converſe unreſervedly

ſervedly with paſſengers, directing them with great good nature and civility in the right road, or communicating to them any other common information.

Their dreſs I think, is agreeable and decent, conſiſting of a petticoat with a border, commonly of a different colour, and a cloſe jacket, which comes half way down the waiſt, and, from the bottom of the fore part of it, drops a looſe ſtomacher, which reaches to the girdle.

Their hair, which is held by them in as high an eſtimation as that beautiful ornament can be regarded by our gayeſt weſtern females, is plaited and interwoven with black ſilk or cotton ſtrings,

ſtrings, which falling down the back, almoſt ſweeps the ground.

Over this dreſs, they throw in a moſt becoming and graceful faſhion, a veil, which ſeldom touches, but never wholly conceals the face.

The women of the principal people are kept in Zinanahs, as amongſt the Muſſulmen, and this practice exiſting in a country*, were little danger is to be apprehended from the inſpection of foreign viſitants, affords ſome reaſon of believing, that the concealing certain ranks of women has been a cuſtom eſtabliſhed amongſt the Hindoos, previouſly to the date of any Mahometan government, in Hinduſtan.

It

* Mountainous and difficult of acceſs.

It was once my opinion that the Hindoos, adopting the uſage of their Muſſulman conquerors—who deem females in the iſſue of war a lawful prize, had ſecluded them from public view.

But ſeeing theſe mountaineers practiſing the ſame mode, and knowing alſo that the Mhahrattahs, who are an independent people, and conſequently free from the apprehenſions, which the conquered Hindoos may entertain, uſe Zinanahs for their women of rank; I am induced to think, that this cuſtom did prevail in India before the æra of the Mahometan invaſion.

At the ſame time, were I to hazard an opinion on ſome of the manners of the

the Hindoos from their hiſtory; the beſt of which, I am to obſerve, is ravelled in a maze of obſcurity and fable, I would ſay, that the Hindoos in former times, did not confine any claſſes of their women.

But as their manners from the great influx of wealth and luxury amongſt them became leſs ſimple, though they are a people who have undergone fewer changes than any other, that the Princes of the country produced this innovation for the purpoſe of impreſſing in the minds of their ſubjects, an awe and reſpect for their families.

In the different relations of the incarnations of Vyſtnou, and in the hiſtory of their antient Princes, it is ſeen,

that at thoſe periods, the Hindoo women had an unreſtrained admiſſion into the aſſemblies of men, and oftentimes poſſeſſed great ſway in them.

In the hiſtory of Ram, who, you know, my dear ſir, made a great figure on earth, I have met with a paſſage, which may ſerve to illuſtrate this poſition, and trace alſo to a high ſource, a mode of trial hitherto practiſed in Europe.

I will premiſe, with informing you, that Sree Mun Narrain, the Grand Deity of the Hindoos, together with his indiviſible aſſociates, the Mhah Letchimy and the Snake, with the view of correcting certain evils and abuſes which at that time had deranged

ranged the terreſtrial ſyſtem, found it expedient to perſonify human beings.

Narrain, acccordingly, took on him the form of Ram, a renowned ſoldier, Letchimy became his wife, under the name of Seetah Devee, and the Snake was transformed into the body of a Letchimun, the brother and conſtant attendant of Ram.

Under this deſignation, theſe perſonages mixed freely in all human ſocieties, nor is there the leaſt mention made in any part of the hiſtory of Seetah's having been reſtricted from an admiſſion to them.

On the contrary, ſhe is repreſented as bearing a part on every occaſion,

where it might have been proper for her ſex to appear.

A ſervice of a dangerous nature required, that Ram ſhould leave Seetah behind him, and the party being then in a deſart, ſhe was conſigned to the charge of Letchimun, until Ram might return.

Seetah and her companion remained ſome time in perfect ſecurity and quiet, when a famed magician, led on doubtleſs by the devil, who is ever on the watch to draw aſtray the ladies, came that way, ſaw Seetah, and became deeply enamoured with her.

This ſubtle man having diſcovered, perhaps, by his ſpells and incantations, that the eyes of women are the ſooneſt enſnared, contrived that a bird of

of a moſt brilliantly beautiful plumage, ſhould fly full in the ſight of Seetah.

This horrid experiment had the deſired and the completeſt effect; for the deluded fair one inſtantly conjured Letchimun, by every thing he could hold dear, by the affection he had for her, by the reſpect he bore to Ram, to procure for her the charming bird.

Letchimun was amazed and much troubled at this entreaty: he endeavored to expoſtulate on the eminent danger of quitting her in ſo perilous a ſituation.

He pointed out to her, in the moſt lively language, the certainty of incurring the ſevereſt diſpleaſure of Ram, for a breach of his orders; and, in

ſhort,

ſhort, he urged every argument which a regard for his own character, or her ſafety, could ſuggeſt.

The dazzling hues of this bird had taken ſuch ample poſſeſſion of the mind of Seetah, that there did not remain in it one unoccupied ſpace for the reception of Letchimun's advice.

She muſt poſſeſs this object of her wiſhes, or ſhe ſhould become the moſt miſerable of women; and, on the repeated denial of Letchimun to comply with her deſire, blinded by the diſappointment of her fondeſt hopes, and hurried on by a burſt of rage, ſhe accuſed Letchimun of the deſign of ſeducing her, and alledged that as the only reaſon of his diſlike of leaving her.

The

This accuſation convincing Letchimun of the inefficacy of his arguments, and the neceſſity of an acquieſcence, he immediately went in queſt of the bird; but, previouſly to his departure, he drew a magic circle around the ſpot where Seetah remained; and told her, while ſhe continued within that ſpace, that no misfortune could betide her.

Letchimun had no ſooner gone, than the plotting necromancer, aſſuming the appearance of an old and a very infirm man, in a languid and a feeble manner approached near the place where Seetah ſtood, and through exceſs of weakneſs, he ſeemed obliged to extend himſelf on the ground.

He beſought her, in an affecting and a pitiable tone of voice, to adminiſter

to

to him a little water to allay his thirſt, and to recruit an almoſt exhauſted ſtrength.

The tender hearted, but ill-fated Seetah felt the full force of the prayers of a diſtreſſed old man, and with a boſom overflowing with the effuſions of humanity and benevolence, unmindful of her own happineſs, ſhe ſtepped beyond the preſcribed bound, and fell that inſtant into the power of her betrayer.

Here the ſtory ſets forth, what would but little contribute to my credit to relate, or your amuſement to be informed of; it only now concerns me to make mention, that after Ram had recovered Seetah, he ordered, for the removal of every ſuſpicion in his own breaſt,

breaſt, and for effectually ſhutting the mouth of Slander, that ſhe ſhould undergo the ordeal trial.

Seetah, eager to baniſh the moſt latent doubt from the mind of her Lord, and anxious to exhibit to the world ſo public a teſtimony of her purity, heard the mandate with pleaſure; and, without any ſhew of dread, walked over the burning iron; but the feet of Seetah, ſays the hiſtorian, being ſhod with innocence, the ſcorching heat was to her as a bed of flowers.

Pardon me, my friend, for thus intruding on you this eaſtern tale, which would be altogether a trifling one, did it not tend to indicate, that the

Hindoos had a knowledge of the ordeal trial, at, doubtleſs, a very early period, and that in thoſe ages it would ſeem their women of the firſt rank appeared in public.

The ſame uſe may be made of this ſtory, as that which is contained in the Arabian Nights entertainment, where amidſt the olio of taliſmans, genii and devils, you are enabled to extract juſt repreſentations of the manners and diſpoſitions of the people.

As I have thus far entered into a ſubject, which has often excited my curioſity, I will, with your permiſſion, proceed ſomewhat farther, and recite to you a circumſtance which may aſſiſt in corroborating my belief, that the Hindoo women of rank, conformably

to

to ancient uſages, and to ſome now exiſting, were not wholly ſecluded from the ſight of men.

When a young woman of the Rajah or the Royal Race, was marriageable, or ſuppoſed to poſſeſs an underſtanding diſcrimination of choice, ſhe was conducted into an apartment, where there were many youths of her own ſex aſſembled, and deſired to ſelect the perſon the moſt pleaſing to her.

She performed the ceremony, of declaring her ſentiments, by throwing a wreath of flowers over the neck of the favored young man, who, if the lady ſhould have been agreeable to him, was eſteemed her future huſband.

This

This rule, I have been informed, is obſerved at this day in Tanjore, where I reſided ſome little time, and received the intelligence from a Mharattah Bramin, who had an employment at the Rajah's court.

The aforegoing opinions, my friend, I have freely given you, and I am to intreat, that you will as freely diſſect and analyſe them; taking ſuch parts as may appear to you founded on reaſon and natural principles, and rejecting ſuch as may ſeem vague or dictated by fancy.

FINIS.

-54(R)
CSL-AS-
AS000525
294.5 SKE